The Canterbury Poets

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THE POEMS

OF

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED.

[SELECTED.]

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

BY FREDERICK COOPER.

LONDON:
Walter Scott, 24 Warwick Lane Paternoster Row
AND NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.
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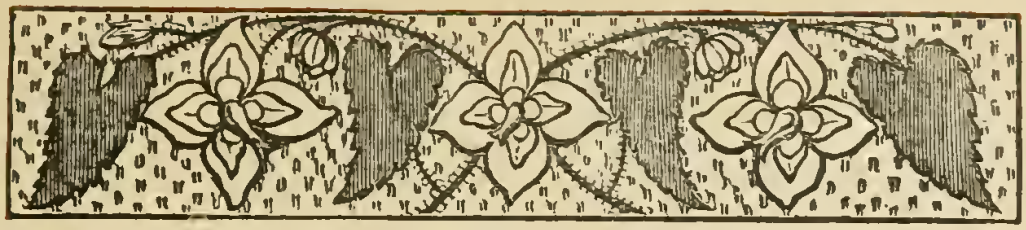

Introductory Notice.

OF all literary reputations, that of the Society Poet is probably enjoyed upon the most hazardous and uncertain of tenures. To be successful at all, he must win the instant recognition of his immediate contemporaries; he must be in touch with the thought of his own generation; he must reflect its sentiments, chime with its humour, and satirise its manners; and in proportion to the popularity of his productions with the public of his own day, will probably be the neglect with which they are treated by the public of a generation later. This neglect on the part of posterity is to some extent comprehensible, even reasonable, for the poem of manners is often nothing more than purely ephemeral in character, and indebted to accident for even its contemporary success, the

measure of which is not to be relied upon as a fair criterion of its intrinsic excellence. Still posterity is apt to be careless and indiscriminating in its neglectfulness. True wit, true humour, true grace and refinement are qualities that should command something more than a fleeting popularity; but even where the public is content, on the strength of the critical verdict of a past generation, to admit that, beyond his fellows, So-and-So was graceful, humorous, and witty, it is often content to let the matter rest there, and not trouble itself with inquiring into the evidence upon which such verdict was founded. Our own century can count not a few poets of barren reputation, much admired, on the strength of old tradition, but very little read. George Canning's wit was, and is, proverbial. Most people have heard of the "Anti-Jacobin Review," and have some slight knowledge of the "Needy Knife-grinder;" beyond that it would puzzle most people to supply any specific information as to anything that he wrote that justifies his reputation. Captain Charles Morris, of the First Life Guards and The Beefsteak Club, wrote enough verse (and very delightful verse it is) to fill a bulky volume, in addition to much more that for sufficient reasons was not re-published in volume form. Part of one line of one poem, "The sweet shady side of Pall Mall," alone survives, apparently for the

especial benefit of leader-writers in the daily papers. Winthrop Mackworth Praed, most precocious and most prolific of the poets of society, began his literary career as a schoolboy, and for twenty years flooded the periodical literature of his day with songs and satires, ballads and legends innumerable, all of which are forgotten. It is not quite fair, perhaps, to say all, for some half-dozen pieces at most survive, and have done duty with monotonous regularity, as representative specimens of his verse, in every volume of poetical selections of the *Vers de Société* order that has seen the light for the last quarter of a century. Thus, Praed's "Good Night to the Season" has become a well-known poem; it is witty, full of brilliant antithesis and word-play, a fairly typical example of Praed's style; still it palls by too frequent repetition, and Praed did much work that is quite equal to it, and some that is even better, and better worth quoting. That Praed's contemporaries thought too highly of him is not, I think, open to question; that he has, since his death, been unreasonably neglected is, at least, equally true. Of his earlier work much is very weak. Youthful poems, if noticeable for the precocity of their writers, are not usually remarkable for their strength or originality. In his more mature days he perpetrated a good deal of verse that is not much above the standard

of the "Keepsake" and "Book of Beauty," in the pages of which polite publications one is quite content to let it rest undisturbed; but beyond all this he wrote a great deal that deserves to live, and that, so far, has hardly had a fair chance of life given to it. In the first instance, Praed was himself responsible for the smothering of his offspring. He seems to have been very indifferent about the ultimate fate of his productions, or about the permanence of his own literary reputation. Everything that he wrote was contributed to periodicals; he never published a book of his own, nor apparently contemplated the collection of any of his poems into a volume, with the exception of some of his political squibs, which, in the last year of his life, he had printed for private circulation among friends. When he died, there was a scheme set on foot for collecting and publishing his poems, and the editorial work was entrusted to his early friend, the Rev. Derwent Coleridge. Four-and-twenty years after, Mrs. Praed being then dead also, the editor completed his labours, and the book was at length given to the world. Mr. Coleridge did his work only *too* well. Every fragment of childish verse, all the boyish contributions to the *Etonian*, every school exercise, every bit of inane, cut-and-dried sentimentality that could be hunted up and identified

in the pages of *Friendship's Offerings*, and the like, were rigorously printed, and poor Praed's handfuls of corn were ruthlessly smothered under his bushels of chaff. One merit was claimed for the book—that of being complete. That merit, unfortunately, did not belong to it, as, for some unexplained reason, the political poems, which are numerous and witty, were altogether excluded. This book, in two volumes, was published in 1864. In 1866 Sir George Young, Praed's nephew, edited a small volume of selections, which was compiled with taste and judgment, as far as it went; but the book was as meagre and insufficient as its predecessor had been bulky and redundant. Both these books have long been out of print and unattainable, and in offering what claims to be a fairly representative selection of the best work of the poet, of whom the most finished literary artist of our day, Mr. Frederick Locker, remarks, that "in his peculiar vein he has never been equalled, and, it may safely be affirmed, can never be excelled," it is believed that the present volume of "The Canterbury Poets" will supply a sensibly-felt want in modern English poetic literature.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed was the third and youngest son of William Mackworth Praed, serjeant-at-law, who was the first chairman of the Audit Board, a post which he filled for many years.

He was born on the 26th July 1802, at 35 John Street, Bedford Row, his father's London residence, although Bitton House, at Teignmouth, the country seat of the family, was always regarded as his paternal home. The original surname of the family was Mackworth, the additional name of Praed having been assumed some generations earlier. Praed's mother was a Miss Winthrop, a member of a family descended from the same stock as the American Winthrops. He had the misfortune to lose her while he was yet very young, but her place was, so far as a mother's place can be filled, worthily taken by an elder sister, to whom he was all his life sincerely attached, and who seems to have been the inspiring genius of his earliest poetical efforts. Young Praed was always, it appears, a constitutionally delicate lad, with a stronge taste for studious pursuits, and small inclination, comparatively, for the rougher pleasures of a schoolboy,—although he was not altogether without mark in the cricket-field and on the river. The fancy for verse-writing developed itself in him at a very early age, and Mr. Derwent Coleridge has preserved from oblivion several of his precocious efforts. There is nothing particularly remarkable in these early verses, beyond those of other juvenile poets, so far at least as the thought is concerned: the best of them is, perhaps, a letter addressed to

his elder sister Susan, "The Forget-me-not," in which Praed's fine sense of form is conspicuously evidenced. This was, no doubt, to a great extent instinctive, but his singularly finished style owed a great deal to his father's severe criticism, Serjeant Praed being a man of sound literary taste, and a great stickler for form.

In 1814 young Winthrop went to Eton, where his poetical proclivities were yet further encouraged by his tutor, Dr. Hawtrey. Two Eton periodicals, *The College Magazine* and *Horæ Otiosæ*, were conducted by some of the boys in the year 1819, and circulated in MS. It does not appear that Praed contributed to either of these, but when they were dropped in 1820, he brought out a MS. journal of his own, the *Apis Matina*, of which six numbers were published in the months of April, May, June, and July. About half the contents of these papers were written by Praed himself, the other contributors being the Honourable Francis Curzon and Walter Trower, afterwards Bishop of Gibraltar. About this time Charles Knight printed at Windsor a selection of the poetry of the *College Magazine*, and Praed and some other ambitious spirits set on foot a project for a regularly published *College Magazine*. Knight agreed to undertake the printing, subject to certain guarantees, which were obtained, and in

October 1820 appeared the first number of the *Etonian*, perhaps the most remarkable schoolboy magazine ever produced. Praed and Walter Blunt were joint editors, the bulk of the contents of the *Magazine* being supplied by the former. His literary fecundity at this time was, considering his age, remarkable. The contributions to the *Magazine* were supposed to be supplied by the members of an association called "The King of Clubs." They were known by *noms de plume*, Praed's being that of Peregrine Courtenay, the President of the Club. There was a prose introduction to each number, describing the proceedings of the Club, the whole of which was in every case written by Praed. During the ten months' existence of the *Magazine* he also contributed to it the following poems, all of some length :—"The Eve of Battle," "Changing Quarters," "The County Ball," "Gog," "Surly Hall," "Reminiscences of my Youth," "To Julia," "To Julio," "To Florence," "The Bachelor," "How to Rhyme for Love," etc., as well as several smaller poems. The staff of the *Etonian* otherwise comprised a good array of names. Among them were the Honourable William Ashley, Edmond Beales, William Chrichton, Honourable Francis Curzon, R. Durnford, William Henry Ord, Thomas Powys Outram, Walter Trower—all boys then at Eton. One Oxonian—Henry Neech—con-

tributed, and five Cantabs—Henry Nelson Coleridge, John Moultrie, John Louis Petit, William Sydney Walker, and another. Among the anonymous contributors were R. Streatfield and J. A. Kinglake.

The *Etonian* appeared regularly every month until July 1821, when it was discontinued in consequence of the editor and principal contributor going up to Cambridge. In Charles Knight's "Passages of a Working Life" there occur, about this date, many references to his first connection with Praed and his friends in the conduct of the *Etonian.* He says :—"The character of Peregrine Courtenay, given in an 'Account of the proceedings which led to the publication of the *Etonian*,' furnishes no satisfactory idea of the youthful Winthrop Mackworth Praed, when he is described as one 'possessed of sound good sense rather than of brilliancy of genius.' His 'general acquirements and universal information' are fitly recorded, as well as his acquaintance with 'the world at large.' But the kindness that lurks under sarcasm; the wisdom that wears the mask of fun; the half melancholy that is veiled by levity—these qualities very soon struck me as far out of the ordinary indications of precocious talent. It is not easy to separate my recollections of the Praed of Eton from those of the Praed of Cambridge. The Etonian of 1820 was natural and unaffected in his

talk, neither shy nor presuming; proud, without a tinge of vanity; somewhat reserved, but ever courteous; giving few indications of the susceptibility of the poet, but ample evidence of the laughing satirist; a pale and slight youth, who had looked upon the aspects of society with the keen perception of a clever manhood; one who had, moreover, seen in human life something more than follies to be ridiculed by the gay jest, or scouted by the sarcastic sneer. His writings then, especially his poems, occasionally exhibited that remarkable union of pathos with wit and humour which attested the originality of his genius, as it was subsequently displayed in maturer efforts."

During Praed's second year at Cambridge he wrote to Charles Knight (who was then contemplating establishing himself in London), to the effect that he should take up no periodical work until Knight started a publication of his own. In consequence of this communication Knight visited Cambridge in December 1822, where he spent a pleasant week with Praed and his friends, making the acquaintance of Macaulay, Malden, and Derwent Coleridge, and there and then settled the general plan of Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*, the first number of which was shortly afterwards brought out.

Praed wrote "Castle Vernon," the introductory

portion of the new *Magazine*, of which, for some numbers, he may be considered to have been the guiding spirit, although the responsible editorship was vested in Knight himself. The principal contributors were Winthrop Mackworth Praed, who used two *noms de plume* (Peregrine Courtenay, and Vyvyan Joyeuse), Thomas Babington Macaulay (Tristram Merton), John Moultrie (Gerard Montgomery), Derwent Coleridge (Davenant Cecil), William Sidney Walker (Edward Hazelfoot), Henry Malden (Hamilton Murray), and Henry Nelson Coleridge (Joseph Haller). Praed's prose style is bright and lively. The "Castle Vernon" papers show it at about its best, but their interest generally is very local and ephemeral. There are some clever little caricatures of some of the principal contributors sketched in here and there, one of which, as an early portrait of Macaulay, it may be worth while to reproduce :—

"'Tristram Merton, come into court!' There came up a short, manly figure, marvellously upright, with a bad neckcloth, and one hand in his waistcoat pocket. Of regular beauty he had little to boast ; but in faces where there is an expression of great power, or great good-humour, or of both, you do not regret its absence.

"'They were glorious days,' he said, with a bend and a look of chivalrous gallantry to the circle

around him, 'they were glorious days for old Athens when all she held of witty and of wise, of brave and of beautiful, was collected in the drawing room of Aspasia. In those, the brightest and noblest times of Greece, there was no feeling so strong as the devotion of youth, no talisman of such virtue as the smile of beauty. Aspasia was the arbitress of peace and war, the queen of arts and arms, the Pallas of the spear and the pen; we have looked back to those golden hours with transport and with longing. Here our classical dreams shall in some sort wear a dress of reality. He who has not the piety of a Socrates may at least fall down before as lovely a divinity; he who has not the power of a Pericles may at least kneel before as beautiful an Aspasia.'

"His tone had just so much of earnest, that what he said was felt as a compliment, and just so much banter that it was felt to be nothing more. As he concluded he dropped on one knee and paused.

"'Tristram,' said the Attorney-General, 'we really are sorry to cramp a culprit in his line of defence; but the time of the court must not be taken up. If you can speak ten words to the purpose'———

"'Prythee, Frederic,' retorted the other, 'leave me to manage my own course. I have an arduous journey to run; and, in such a circle, like the poor

prince in the *Arabian Tales*, I must be frozen into stone before I can finish my task without turning to the right or the left.'

"'For the love you bear us, a truce to your similes: they shall be felony without benefit of clergy; and silence for an hour shall be the penalty.'

"'A penalty for similes! horrible! Paul of Russia prohibited round hats, Chihu of China denounced white teeth, but this is atrocious!'

"'I beseech you, Tristram, if you can for a moment forget your omniscience, let us———'

"'I will endeavour. It is related of Zoroaster that———'"

. . . . . .

Knight's *Quarterly* was started with much spirit, and promised to become a great success. Much was hoped for from the co-operation of Macaulay, but after the appearance of the first number he was compelled to withdraw his name from the list of contributors, although with much regret, in deference to the wishes of his family, whose religious scruples, it is to be presumed, were alarmed at the frivolous character of the publication. The difficulty was subsequently surmounted, and Macaulay resumed his connection with the *Magazine* with the third number. His contributions to it were noteworthy, and included his fine poems of

"Ivry" and "Moncontour," and the "Songs of the Civil War." In the interval, Praed worked hard to fill the void caused by Macaulay's defection, and his contributions in prose and verse make up about one-third of the contents of the second number of the *Magazine.* In this number was published the first canto of his unfinished poem, "The Troubadour." With De Quincey and Barry St. Leger added to the staff of the *Magazine*, its prospects appeared bright enough, but dissensions arose among the contributors, which finally led to its being discontinued. It is impossible to say now what were the exact grounds of quarrel. It appears evident, however, that Knight was properly tenacious of his position as responsible editor, and declined to admit the irresponsible interference of his undergraduate staff. Praed seems to have become jealous, and impatient of editorial supervision, and seceded from the *Magazine*, carrying most of his friends with him. Knight's *Quarterly* ceased to appear, therefore, after the publication of the sixth number. An attempt was subsequently made to carry it on with another staff, but the character of the publication was materially altered, and in its new form it failed to command popularity. Charles Knight had published a rather bitter notice in No. 6 of the *Magazine*, to which Praed replied in a letter addressed to the *Cambridge Chronicle.* Knight

wrote a rejoinder, and there the matter ended. Two months later, however, Praed called upon Knight of his own accord, and friendly intercourse was resumed between them, so that in the Spring of 1826 we find Praed again co-operating with Knight and Barry St. Leger in the conduct of a new periodical. This was *The Brazen Head*, a cheap weekly publication, that was designed to deal with current events in a humorous manner. The Friar Bacon legend was utilised as a framework, and the Friar and the Head, under Praed's direction, discoursed wittily together, week by week, upon the topics of the day. "We had," said Knight, "four weeks of this pleasantry : and, what was not an advantage, we had nearly all the amusement to ourselves, for the number of our purchasers was not legion." So *The Brazen Head* went the way of its predecessor. Brief though its existence was, it contained some of Winthrop Praed's most charming and characteristic verse. The opening poem of the first number, "The Chant of the Brazen Head," is in particular unsurpassable among his compositions.

Praed's literary occupations were not permitted to interfere with his University work to any serious extent, although they absorbed most of his interest. The Rev. Derwent Coleridge says, with reference to his University career, 'There can be no doubt

that he might have attained higher distinction as a scholar by a course of systematic study, for he showed in after life both the power of thorough investigation and a sense of its value; but the bent of his genius, and perhaps the state of his bodily health, inclined him to a more discursive occupation. As it was, though he failed as a competitor for the University scholarship, the long and shining list of his academic honours bore full testimony, not merely to his extraordinary talent, but to the high character of his scholastic attainments.

"In 1822 he gained Sir William Browne's medal for the Greek Ode, and for the Epigrams; in 1823 the same medal a second time for the Greek Ode, with the first prize for English and Latin declamation in his college. In 1824, Sir William Browne's medal a second time for Epigrams. In 1823 and 1824 he also gained the Chancellor's medal for English verse—'Australasia' being the subject the former year, and 'Athens' in the latter. In the classical tripos his name appeared twice in the list, a high position, yet scarcely adding to the reputation which he already enjoyed. In 1827 he was successful in the examination for a Trinity Fellowship, and in 1830 he completed his University triumphs by gaining the Seatonian prize."

On leaving Cambridge, Praed practised for a while at the bar, apparently with no great success. Politics at this time engaged his attention more particularly, and in 1830 he was returned to Parliament for the first time, as member for the soon-to-be-extinguished borough of St. Germains. Praed had been a rival of Macaulay's for the leadership of the Union, and much was expected of him as a speaker. Of course he disappointed expectations, but his contributions to the debate on the Reform Bill of 1830, although not brilliant, were not ineffective. He was the mover of two amendments: one that freeholds in boroughs should confer borough and not county votes; and the other, in support of which his most successful speech was delivered, was a scheme of minority representation, that appears to have been identical with that which has been, until recently, in force in three-cornered constituencies.

St. Germains having been disfranchised, Praed in 1832 unsuccessfully contested St. Ives, in Cornwall, where he had some family influence. Being excluded from Parliament, he turned his attention to political journalism, and became a leader-writer on the *Morning Post*, to which paper also he contributed numerous anonymous political squibs. Praed began his career as a Liberal, but about this time he became a convert to Conserva-

tive opinions. Of this change of front he himself writes to a friend: "My old college opinions have been considerably modified by subsequent acquaintance with the world and observation of things *as they are.* I am not going to stem a torrent, but I should like to confine its fury within some bounds. . . . So my part in political matters will probably expose me to all sorts of abuse for ratting, and so forth. I abandon the party, if ever I belonged to it, in which my friends and my interests are both to be found, and I adopt one where I can hope to earn nothing but a barren reputation, and the consciousness of meaning well."

His connection with the *Morning Post* led to a personal acquaintance with the leaders of the Tory party; and overtures having been made to him in 1835 to join Sir Robert Peel's Administration, he accepted the post of Secretary to the Board of Control, and re-entered Parliament as member for Great Yarmouth. In the same year he married Helen, daughter of George Bogle, Esq.

Sir Robert Peel's Government came to a sudden and untimely end in about three months, and with it ended Praed's brief career as a minister.

In 1837 he retired from Great Yarmouth, and was returned for Aylesbury, which borough he continued to represent until his death, which occurred in 1839. His health, never robust, is said to have

been permanently affected by his exertions at the Great Yarmouth election of 1834, and to this has been attributed the development of the fatal lung disease to which he fell a victim. The winter of 1838-39 he spent at St. Leonard's with his wife and two infant daughters, returning to London for the meeting of Parliament in February 1839, when his general health appeared to have improved. His energy was untiring: he was constant in his attendance during the seven nights' debate on the Corn Laws, and in May, when the House adjourned, consequent upon a change of Government, he paid a flying visit to Cambridge in his official capacity of Deputy High Steward of the University. The weather was very severe, and on his returning to London his health was visibly breaking up. He continued to attend in his place in the House of Commons, however, until the middle of June, when he paired for the remainder of the Session with Lord Arundel. On the 15th of July he was dead.

During the last ten or twelve years of his life Praed was a constant contributor of verse to the periodicals of his day, although he was never associated with any purely literary undertaking in the same intimate manner as he was in the case of Knight's *Quarterly Magazine.* Charles Knight engaged his and John Moultrie's co-operation in

Friendship's Offering for 1827, which he, Knight, edited for Smith & Elder. Praed contributed the "Red Fisherman," the only one of his legendary ballads that has achieved any lasting popularity. Praed's original title for this poem was "The Devil's Decoy," which "some blockhead in the confidence of the publishers" thought fit, on his own responsibility, to alter to "The Red Fisherman." Praed was very angry, and was disposed to regard Charles Knight as responsible, and it was with difficulty that another rupture between the old friends was averted. "The Red Fisherman" has been frequently quoted, and it has been the fashion to regard it as Praed's happiest effort in ballad writing, although in what respect it can be deemed superior to "The Bridal of Belmont," "The Haunted Tree," "The Teufelhaus,"—which is even more weirdly powerful—it is impossible to say. "The Troubadour," Praed's longest poem, contains much that is very charming. The first two cantos of it were published in Knight's *Quarterly*. Praed's secession from the *Magazine* interrupted the continuation. Only a portion of the third canto was ever written. The poem is very indeterminate in character, and might have been carried on indefinitely, as each canto brings the hero into a new field of adventure, and supplies a tale or episode complete in itself. The poem, even as far as it was published, is too

lengthy for insertion *in extenso*, but selected lyrics from it will be found in this volume.

Praed's claim to distinction, however, rests entirely upon his Poetry of Life and Manners. As a writer of what, for want of a better name, we call *Vers de Société*, he was in his time unapproachable, and has hardly, at any time, been surpassed. Verse-writing of this class in Praed's early days had sunk to a very low ebb. Neither Canning's wit nor Moore's gay fancy inspired the vapid scribblers who filled albums and keepsakes with "Lines to Ladies' Portraits,"

> "Soft songs to Julia's cockatoo,
> Fierce odes to Famine and to Slaughter."

Praed taught his contemporaries to be natural. He had a remarkable fluency of expression. He was humorous, witty, and good-natured; he was a man of the world, and knew his world well, gauged its weaknesses with accuracy, and judged them with the leniency of a good-humoured worldly philosopher, contriving, meanwhile, not to forfeit his own character for honesty and healthiness of mind. There is nothing very deep about Praed's poetry, yet is it not entirely superficial. He had keen insight and plenty of discrimination, but for great passion or sustained power he had no capabilities. Lightly and gracefully he skated over the

thin surface ice of sentiment, not ignorant of, yet with little desire to fathom, the unknown depths of passion and suffering that lay beneath. "The genius of gentleman" claimed for Horace by the late Lord Lytton, belonged to Praed in no common degree. No man equally witty and brilliant was ever more perfectly well-bred in his writings: without prudery, affectation, or cant, he was never slangy, suggestive, or irreverent: he even achieved the difficult art of writing political satires that lost none of their point from the fact of their being free from coarseness or personality. He was a typical society poet, compounded of wit, scholar, and gentleman. His world was not a very serious or a very earnest world, and he wrote of it pretty much as he found it, with some slight touches of half-sad, half-cynical, but never unkindly moralising; yet with all its faults it was a pleasant world to those whom it treated well, and a man laden with society's favours, as was Praed, was not likely to develop into a Democritus. Few poets have been better treated by the world than he was: the paths of literature and politics were never thorny ones to him; his talents brought him reputation before he had ever struggled to attain it. Helping hands were freely held out to him from the hour of his first schoolboy success; he was popular in society, fortunate in friendship, and, above all things,

happy in his family and domestic affections. Mr. Locker remarks of the qualities of his poetry, that "his fancy is less wild than Moore's, while his sympathies are narrower than Thackeray's." Both statements (qualified by the further expression of opinion that has already been quoted) may be accepted without much demur. With regard to the latter remark, there are indeed few writers of the century of whom it might not, with equal justice, have been made. Admitting that his sympathies were neither very deep nor very wide, they are at least essentially and uniformly healthy and pure. Whatever might have been Praed's matter, his manner, although not versatile, is always good. His fluency of expression is remarkable, and must have even been a source of weakness, since a man who wrote so much, so constantly, and with so little effort, must almost inevitably have perpetrated a good deal of inferior work in his time. What Praed published formed only a portion of what he wrote, for he was always ready to scribble verse on slight temptation ; and that "inquisitive man with the note book," Nathaniel Parker Willis, who met Praed at a country house, has left it on record that he was ever open to furnish contributions to the inevitable album that every fair one cherished in those days. Praed's style, as has been said, is not versatile :

he never hazarded possible harshness by metrical experiments, and the measures that he particularly affected have become intimately associated with the general characteristics of his style ; his rhyme and rhythm are both perfect, and apparently instinctive, as if writing in metre were as effortless an exercise to him as writing in prose.

To conclude in the words of the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, " Not unknown, nor without mark in the arena of political conflict, the name of Praed is still remembered as at least that of a forward pupil in the school of statesmanship ; and though his literary honours, won in earliest manhood, and sustained by the casual productions of a leisure hour, were worn carelessly, while he was preparing for more serious duties, yet now that years have gone by, and we have to audit the past with no expectation of any future account, we find that he has left behind him a permanent expression of wit and grace, refined and tender feeling, of inventive fancy and acute observation, unique in character, and his own by an undisputed title."

FREDERICK COOPER.

Poems by W. M. Praed.

LEGENDS AND TALES.

THE RED FISHERMAN; OR, THE DEVIL'S DECOY.

(1827.)

"Oh flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified."—*Romeo and Juliet.*

THE Abbot arose, and closed his book,
  And donned his sandal shoon,
And wandered forth, alone, to look
  Upon the summer moon:
A starlight sky was o'er his head,
  A quiet breeze around;
And the flowers a thrilling fragrance shed,
  And the waves a soothing sound:
It was not an hour, nor a scene, for aught
  But love and calm delight;
Yet the holy man had a cloud of thought
  On his wrinkled brow that night.
He gazed on the river that gurgled by,
  But he thought not of the reeds;

He clasped his gilded rosary,
  But he did not tell the beads ;
If he looked to the heaven, 'twas not to invoke
  The Spirit that dwelleth there ;
If he opened his lips, the words they spoke
  Had never the tone of prayer.
A pious priest might the Abbot seem,
  He had swayed the crozier well ;
But what was the theme of the Abbot's dream,
  The Abbot were loth to tell.

Companionless, for a mile or more,
He traced the windings of the shore.
Oh, beauteous is that river still,
As it winds by many a sloping hill,
And many a dim o'erarching grove,
And many a flat and sunny cove,
And terraced lawns, whose bright arcades
The honeysuckle sweetly shades,
And rocks, whose very crags seem bowers,
So gay they are with grass and flowers !
But the Abbot was thinking of scenery
  About as much, in sooth,
As a lover thinks of constancy,
  Or an advocate of truth.
He did not mark how the skies in wrath
  Grew dark above his head ;
He did not mark how the mossy path
  Grew damp beneath his tread ;
And nearer he came, and still more near,
  To a pool, in whose recess
The water had slept for many a year,
  Unchanged and motionless ;
From the river stream it spread away
  The space of half a rood ;

The surface had the hue of clay
  And the scent of human blood;
The trees and the herbs that round it grew
  Were venomous and foul,
And the birds that through the bushes flew
  Were the vulture and the owl;
The water was as dark and rank
  As ever a company pumped,
And the perch, that was netted and laid on the bank,
  Grew rotten while it jumped;
And bold was the man who thither came
  At midnight, man or boy,
For the place was cursed with an evil name,
  And that name was "The Devil's Decoy!"

The Abbot was weary as abbot could be,
And he sat down to rest on the stump of a tree:
When suddenly rose a dismal tone—
Was it a song, or was it a moan?
"O ho! O ho!
Above—below—
Lightly and brightly they glide and go!
The hungry and keen on the top are leaping,
The lazy and fat in the depths are sleeping;
Fishing is fine when the pool is muddy,
Broiling is rich when the coals are ruddy."
In a monstrous fright, by the murky light,
He looked to the left and he looked to the right,
And what was the vision close before him,
That flung such a sudden stupor o'er him?
'Twas a sight to make the hair uprise,
  And the life blood colder run:
The startled priest struck both his thighs,
  And the abbey clock struck one!

All alone, by the side of the pool,
A tall man sat on a three-legged stool,
Kicking his heels on the dewy sod,
And putting in order his reel and rod ;
Red were the rags his shoulders wore,
And a high red cap on his head he bore ;
His arms and his legs were long and bare ;
And two or three locks of long red hair
Were tossing about his scraggy neck,
Like a tattered flag o'er a splitting wreck.
It might be time, or it might be trouble,
Had bent that stout back nearly double,
Sunk in their deep and hollow sockets
That blazing couple of Congreve rockets,
And shrunk and shrivelled that tawny skin,
Till it hardly covered the bones within.
The line the Abbot saw him throw
Had been fashioned and formed long ages ago,
And the hands that worked his foreign vest
Long ages ago had gone to their rest :
You would have sworn, as you looked on them.
He had fished in the flood with Ham and Shem !

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
Minnow or gentle, worm or fly—
It seemed not such to the Abbot's eye ;
Gaily it glittered with jewel and gem,
And its shape was the shape of a diadem.
It was fastened a gleaming hook about
By a chain within and a chain without ;
The fisherman gave it a kick and a spin,
And the water fizzed as it tumbled in !

From the bowels of the earth
Strange and varied sounds had birth ;
Now the battle's bursting peal,
Neigh of steed, and clang of steel ;
Now an old man's hollow groan
Echoed from the dungeon stone ;
Now the weak and wailing cry
Of a stripling's agony !
Cold by this was the midnight air ;
  But the Abbot's blood ran colder,
When he saw a gasping knight lie there,
With a gash beneath his clotted hair,
  And a hump upon his shoulder.
And the loyal churchman strove in vain
  To mutter a Pater Noster ;
For he who writhed in mortal pain
Was camped that night on Bosworth plain—
  The cruel Duke of Glo'ster !

There was turning of keys and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
It was a haunch of princely size,
Filling with fragrance earth and skies.
The corpulent Abbot knew full well
The swelling form, and the steaming smell ;
Never a monk that wore a hood
Could better have guessed the very wood
Where the noble hart had stood at bay,
Weary and wounded, at close of day.

Sounded then the noisy glee
Of a revelling company—
Sprightly story, wicked jest,
Rated servant, greeted guest,

Flow of wine and flight of cork,
Stroke of knife, and thrust of fork :
But, where'er the board was spread,
Grace, I ween, was never said !
Pulling and tugging the Fisherman sat ;
And the Priest was ready to vomit,
When he hauled out a gentleman, fine and fat,
With a belly as big as a brimming vat,
And a nose as red as a comet.
"A capital stew," the Fisherman said,
"With cinnamon and sherry !"
And the Abbot turned away his head,
For his brother was lying before him dead—
The Mayor of St. Edmund's Bury !

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
It was a bundle of beautiful things—
A peacock's tail, and a butterfly's wings,
A scarlet slipper, an auburn curl,
A mantle of silk, and a bracelet of pearl,
And a packet of letters, from whose sweet fold
Such a stream of delicate odours rolled,
That the Abbot fell on his face, and fainted,
And deemed his spirit was half-way sainted.

Sounds seemed dropping from the skies,
Stifled whispers, smothered sighs,
And the breath of vernal gales,
And the voice of nightingales :
But the nightingales were mute,
Envious, when an unseen lute
Shaped the music of its chords
Into passion's thrilling words :

"Smile, Lady, smile! I will not set
Upon my brow the coronet,
Till thou wilt gather roses white
To wear around its gems of light.
Smile, Lady, smile!—I will not see
Rivers and Hastings bend the knee,
Till those bewitching lips of thine
Will bid me rise in bliss from mine.
Smile, Lady, smile!—for who would win
A loveless throne through guilt and sin?
Or who would reign o'er vale and hill,
If woman's heart were rebel still?"

One jerk, and there a lady lay,
    A lady wondrous fair;
But the rose of her lip had faded away,
And her cheek was as white and as cold as clay,
    And torn was her raven hair.
"Ah, ha!" said the Fisher, in merry guise,
    "Her gallant was hooked before;"
And the Abbot heaved some piteous sighs,
For oft he had blessed those deep blue eyes,
    The eyes of Mistress Shore!

There was turning of keys and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
Many the cunning sportsman tried,
Many he flung with a frown aside;
A minstrel's harp, and a miser's chest,
A hermit's cowl, and a baron's crest,
Jewels of lustre, robes of price,
Tomes of heresy, loaded dice,
And golden cups of the brightest wine
That ever was pressed from the Burgundy vine.
There was a perfume of sulphur and nitre,
As he came at last to a bishop's mitre!

From top to toe the Abbot shook,
As the Fisherman armed his golden hook,
And awfully were his features wrought
By some dark dream or wakened thought.
Look how the fearful felon gazes
On the scaffold his country's vengeance raises,
When the lips are cracked and the jaws are dry
With the thirst which only in death shall die:
Mark the mariner's frenzied frown
As the swirling wherry settles down,
When peril has numbed the sense and will,
Though the hand and the foot may struggle still:
Wilder far was the Abbot's glance,
Deeper far was the Abbot's trance:
Fixed as a monument, still as air,
He bent no knee, and he breathed no prayer;
But he signed—he knew not why or how—
The sign of the Cross on his clammy brow.

There was turning of keys and creaking of locks,
As he stalked away with his iron box.
"O ho! O ho!
The cock doth crow;
It is time for the Fisher to rise and go.
Fair luck to the Abbot, fair luck to the shrine!
He hath gnawed in twain my choicest line; [south,
Let him swim to the north, let him swim to the
The Abbot will carry my hook in his mouth!"

The Abbot had preached for many years
With as clear articulation
As ever was heard in the House of Peers
Against Emancipation;
His words had made battalions quake,
Had roused the zeal of martyrs,

Had kept the Court an hour awake,
  And the King himself three-quarters :
But ever since that hour, 'tis said,
  He stammered and he stuttered,
As if an axe went through his head
  With every word he uttered.
He stuttered o'er blessing, he stuttered o'er ban,
  He stuttered, drunk or dry ;
And none but he and the Fisherman
  Could tell the reason why !

THE LEGEND OF THE DRACHENFELS.

"LEAD me away ! I am weak and young,
Captive the fierce and proud among ;
But I will pray a humble prayer,
That the feeble to strike may be strong to bear.

"Lead me away ! oh, dear to mine eyes
Are the flowery fields and the sunny skies ;
But I cannot turn from the Cross divine,
To bend my knee at an idol's shrine."

They clothe her in such rich array
As a bride prepares for her bridal day ;
Around her forehead, that shines so bright,
They wreathe a wreath of roses white,
And set on her neck a golden chain,
Spoil of her sire in combat slain,
Over her head her doom is said ;
And with folded arms and measured tread,
In long procession, dark and slow,
Up the terrible hill they go,

Hymning their hymn, and crying their cry,
To him, their Demon Deity—
Mary, Mother, sain and save!
The maiden kneels at the Dragon's cave!

Alas! 'tis frightful to behold
That thing of Nature's softest mould,
In whose slight shape and delicate hue
Life's loveliness beams, fresh and new,
Bound on the bleak hill's topmost height,
To die, and by such death, to-night!
But yester-eve, when the red sun
His race of grateful toil had run,
And over earth the moon's soft rays
Lit up the hour of prayer and praise,
She bowed within the pleasant shade
By her own fragrant jasmine made;
And while her clear and thrilling tone
Asked blessing from her Maker's throne,
Heard the notes echoed to her ear
From lips that were to her most dear.
Her sire, her kindred, round her knelt;
And the young priestess knew and felt
That deeper love than that of men
Was in their natural temple then.
That love—is now its radiance chill?
Oh! fear not! it is o'er her still!

The crowd departed; and alone
She kneeled upon the rugged stone.
Alas! it was a dismal pause,
When the wild rabble's fierce applause
    Died slowly on the answering air;
And in the still and mute profound,
She started even at the sound
    Of the half-thought, half-spoken prayer

Her heart and lip had scarcely power
To feel or frame in that dark hour,
Fearful, yet blameless ! for her birth,
Fair victim, was of common earth,
And she was nurst, in happier hours,
By Nature's common suns and showers;
And when one moment whirls away
Whate'er we know or trust to-day,
And opens that eternal book,
On which we long, and dread, to look—
In that quick change of sphere and scope,
  That rushing of the spirit's wings
From all we have to all we hope,
  From mortal to immortal things—
Though madly on the giddy brink
  Despair may smile, and Guilt dissemble,
White Innocence a while will shrink,
  And Piety be proud to tremble !
But quickly from her brow and cheek
  The flush of human terror faded,
And she aroused, the maiden meek,
  Her fainting spirit, self-upbraided,
And felt her secret soul renewed
In that her solemn solitude.
Unwonted strength to her was given
  To bear the rod and drink the cup ;
Her pulse beat calmer, and to Heaven
  Her voice in firmer tone went up :
And as upon her gentle heart
  The dew of holy peace descended,
She saw her last sunlight depart
  With awe and hope so meekly blended
Into a deep and tranquil sense
Of unpresuming confidence,
That if the blinded tribes, whose breath

Had doomed her to such dole and death,
Could but have caught one bright, brief glance
Of that ungrieving countenance,
And marked the light of glory shed
Already o'er her sinless head,
The tears with which her eyes were full—
Tears not of anguish—and the smile
Of new-born rapture, which the while
As with a lustrous veil arrayed
Her brow, her cheek, her lip, and made
Her beauty more than beautiful—
Oh, would they not have longed to share
Her torture—yea ! her transport, there?

"Father, my sins are very great;
Thou readest them, whate'er they be;
But penitence is all too late;
And unprepared I come to Thee,
Uncleansed, unblessed, unshriven !

"Yet Thou, in whose all-searching sight
No human thing is undefiled—
Thou, who art merciful in might,
Father, Thou wilt forgive Thy child—
Father, Thou hast forgiven !

"Thy will, not hers, be done to-day !
If in this hour, and on this spot,
Her soul indeed must pass away
Among fierce men who know Thee not—
Thine is the breath Thou gavest !

"Or, if Thou wilt put forth Thine hand
And shield her from the jaws of flame,
That she may live to teach the land
Whose people hath not heard Thy name—
Thine be the life Thou savest !"

So spoke the blessed maid, and now
  Crossing her hands upon her breast,
With quiet eye and placid brow
  Awaited the destroying pest ;
Not like a thing of sense and life
Soul-harrassed in such bitter strife,
But tranquil, as a shape of stone
Upraised in ages long bygone
To mark where, closed her toilsome race,
Some sainted sister sleeps in grace.
Such Bertha seemed : about her grew
Sweet wild-flowers, sweet of scent and hue ;
And she had fixed with pious care
Her crucifix before her there,
That her last look and thought might be
Of Christ and of the Holy Tree.

The day was gone, but it was not night :—
Whither so suddenly fled the light ?
Nature seemed sick with a sore disease ;
Over her hills and streams and trees
    Unnatural darkness fell ;
The earth and the heaven, the river and shore,
In the lurid mist were seen no more ;
And the voice of the mountain monster rose,
As he lifted him up from his noontide repose,
First in a hiss and then in a cry,
And then in a yell that shook the sky ;
The eagle from high fell down to die
    At the sound of that mighty yell :
From his wide jaws broke, as in wrath he woke,
Scalding torrents of sulphurous smoke,
And crackling coals in mad ascent
As from a red volcano went,
    And flames, like the flames of hell.

But his scream of fury waxed more shrill,
When on the peak of the blasted hill
    He saw his victim bound :
Forth the Devourer, scale by scale,
Uncoiled the folds of his steel-proof mail,
Stretching his throat, and stretching his tail,
And hither and thither rolling him o'er,
Till he covered four score feet and four
    Of the wearied and wailing ground :
And at last he raised from his stony bed
The horrors of his speckled head ;
Up like a comet the meteor went,
And seemed to shake the firmament,
    And batter heaven's own walls !
For many a long mile, well I ween,
The fires that shot from those eyes were seen ;
The Burschen of Bonn, if Bonn had been,
    Would have shuddered in their halls.
Woe for the Virgin !—bootless here
Were glistening shield and whistling spear
    Such battle to abide ;
The mightiest engines that ever the trade
Of human homicide hath made,
Warwolf, balist, and catapult,
Would like a stripling's wand insult
    That adamantine hide.
Woe for the Virgin !—
                Lo ! what spell
Hath scattered the darkness, and silenced the yell,
    And quenched those fiery showers ?—
Why turns the serpent from his prey ?—
The Cross hath barred his terrible way,
    The Cross among the flowers.
As an eagle pierced on his cloudy throne,
As a column sent from its base of stone,

Backward the stricken monster dropped ;
Never he stayed, and never he stopped,
Till deep in the gushing tide he sank
And buried lay beneath the stream,
Passing away like a loathsome dream.
Well may you guess how either bank
As with an earthquake shook ;
The mountains rocked from brow to base ;
The river boiled with a hideous din ;
As the burning mass fell heavily in ;
And the wide, wide Rhine, for a moment's space
Was scorched into a brook.

Night passed, ere the multitude dared to creep,
Huddled together, up the steep ;
They came to the stone ; in speechless awe
They fell on their face at the sight they saw :
The maiden was free from hurt or harm,
But the iron had passed from her neck and arm,
And the glittering links of the broken chain
Lay scattered about like drops of rain.

And deem ye that the rescued child
To her father-land would come—
That the remnant of her kindred smiled
Around her in her home,
And that she lived in love of earth,
Among earth's hopes and fears,
And gave God thanks for the daily birth
Of blessings in after years?—
Holy and happy, she turned not away
From the task her Saviour set that day ;
What was her kindred, her home, to her?
She had been Heaven's own messenger !

Short time went by from that dread hour
Of manifested wrath and power,
Ere from the cliff a little shrine
Looked down upon the rolling Rhine.
Duly the virgin Priestess there
Led day by day the hymn and prayer ;
And the dark heathen round her pressed
To know their Maker, and be blessed.

L'Envoi.

To the Countess Von C——, Bonn.

I.

This the Legend of the Drachenfels—
  Sweet theme, most feebly sung ; and yet to me
My feeble song is grateful ; for it tells
  Of far-off smiles and voices. Though it be
Unmeet, fair Lady, for thy breast or bower,
  Yet thou wilt wear, for thou didst plant the flower.

II.

It had been worthier of such birth and death
  If it had bloomed where thou didst watch its rise,
Framed by the zephyr of the fragrant breath,
  Warmed by the sunshine of thy gentle eyes,
And cherished by the love, in whose pure shade
No evil thing can live, no good thing fade.

III.

It will be long ere thou wilt shed again
  Thy praise or censure on my childish lays—
Thy praise, which makes me happy more than vain,
  Thy censure, kinder than another's praise.

Huge mountains frown between us, and the swell
Of the loud sea is mocking my farewell.

IV.

Yet not the less, dear Friend, thy guiding light
  Shines through the secret chambers of my thought;
Or when I waken, with revived delight,
  The lute young Fancy to my cradle brought,
Or when I visit with a studious brow
The less-loved task, to which I turn me now.

THE LEGEND OF THE TEUFEL-HAUS.

THE way was lone, and the hour was late,
And Sir Rudolph was far from his castle gate.
The night came down by slow degrees
On the river stream, and the forest trees;
And by the heat of the heavy air,
And by the lightning's distant glare,
And by the rustling of the woods,
And by the roaring of the floods,
In half-an-hour, a man might say,
The Spirit of Storm would ride that way.
But little he cared, that stripling pale,
For the sinking sun, or the rising gale;
For he, as he rode, was dreaming now,
Poor youth, of a woman's broken vow,
Of the cup dashed down, ere the wine was tasted,
Of elegant speeches sadly wasted,

Of a gallant heart all burnt to ashes,
And the Baron of Katzberg's long mustaches.
So the earth below, and the heaven above,
He saw them not ;—those dreams of love,
As some have found, and some will find,
Make men extremely deaf and blind.
At last he opened his great blue eyes,
And looking about in vast surprise,
Found that his hunter had turned his back
An hour ago on the beaten track,
And now was threading a forest hoar,
Where steed had never stepped before.
"By Cæsar's head," Sir Rudolph said,
"It were a sorry joke,
If I to-night should make my bed
On the turf, beneath an oak!
Poor Roland reeks from head to hoof;
Now for thy sake, good roan,
I would we were beneath a roof,
Were it the foul fiend's own!"

Ere the tongue could rest, ere the lips could close,
The sound of a listener's laughter rose.
It was not the scream of a merry boy
When Harlequin waves his wand of joy;
Nor the shout from a serious curate, won
By a bending bishop's annual pun;
Nor the roar of a Yorkshire clown;—oh, no!
It was a gentle laugh, and low;
Half uttered, perhaps, and stifled half,
A good old-gentlemanly laugh;
Such as my uncle Peter's are,
When he tells you his tales of Dr. Parr.
The rider looked to the left and the right,
With something of marvel, and more of fright:

But brighter gleamed his anxious eye,
When a light shone out from a hill hard by.
Thither he spurred, as gay and glad
As Mr. Macquill's delighted lad,
When he turns away from the Pleas of the Crown,
Or flings, with a yawn, old Saunders down,
And flies, at last, from all the mysteries
Of Plaintiff's and Defendant's histories,
To make himself sublimely neat,
For Mrs. Camac's in Mansfield Street.
At a lofty gate Sir Rudolph halted;
Down from his seat Sir Rudolph vaulted:
And he blew a blast with might and main,
On a bugle that hung by an iron chain.
The sound called up a score of sounds;—
The screeching of owls, and the baying of hounds,
The hollow toll of the turret bell,
The call of the watchful sentinel,
And a groan at last, like a peal of thunder,
As the huge old portals rolled asunder,
And gravely from the castle hall
Paced forth the white-robed seneschal.
He stayed not to ask of what degree
So fair and famished a knight might be;
But knowing that all untimely question
Ruffles the temper, and mars the digestion,
He laid his hand upon the crupper,
And said—"You're just in time for supper!"

They led him to the smoking board,
And placed him next the Castle's Lord.
He looked around with a hurried glance:
You may ride from the border to fair Penzance,
And nowhere, but at Epsom Races,
Find such a group of ruffian faces

As thronged that chamber: some were talking
Of feats of hunting and of hawking,
And some were drunk, and some were dreaming,
And some found pleasure in blaspheming.
He thought, as he gazed on the fearful crew,
That the lamps that burned on the walls burned
blue.
They brought him a pasty of mighty size,
To cheer his heart, and to charm his eyes;
They brought the wine, so rich and old,
And filled to the brim the cup of gold;
The knight looked down, and the knight looked up,
But he carved not the meat, and he drained not
the cup.

"Ho, ho," said his host, with angry brow,
"I wot our guest is fine;
Our fare is far too coarse, I trow,
For such nice taste as thine:
Yet trust me I have cooked the food,
And I have filled the can,
Since I have lived in this old wood,
For many a nobler man."—

"The savoury buck and the ancient cask
To a weary man are sweet;
But ere he taste, it is fit he ask
For a blessing on bowl and meat.
Let me pray but a minute's space,
And bid me pledge ye then;
I swear to ye, by our Lady's grace,
I shall eat and drink like ten!"

The Lord of the Castle in wrath arose,
He frowned like a fiery dragon;

Indignantly he blew his nose,
  And overturned a flagon.
And "Away," quoth he, "with the canting priest,
Who comes uncalled to a midnight feast,
And breathes through a helmet his holy benison,
To sour my hock, and spoil my venison!"
That moment all the lights went out;
And they dragged him forth, that rabble rout,
With oath, and threat, and foul scurrility,
And every sort of incivility.
They barred the gates; and the peal of laughter,
Sudden and shrill, that followed after,
Died off into a dismal tone,
Like a parting spirit's painful moan.
"I wish," said Rudolph, as he stood
On foot in the deep and silent wood;
"I wish, good Roland, rack and stable
May be kinder to-night than their master's table!'

By this the storm had fleeted by;
  And the moon with a quiet smile looked out
From the glowing arch of a cloudless sky,
  Flinging her silvery beams about
On rock, tree, wave, and gladdening all
  With just as miscellaneous bounty
As Isabel's, whose sweet smiles fall
  In half-an-hour on half the county.
Less wild Sir Rudolph's pathway seemed,
  As he turned from that discourteous tower.
Small spots of verdure gaily gleamed
  On either side; and many a flower,
Lily, and violet, and heart's-ease,
  Grew by the way, a fragrant border;
And the tangled bows of the hoary trees
  Were twined in picturesque disorder:

And there came from the grove, and there came
from the hill
The loveliest sounds he had ever heard,
The cheerful voice of the dancing rill,
And the sad sad song of the lonely bird.
And at last he stared with wondering eyes,
As well he might, on a large pavilion:
'Twas clothed with stuffs of a hundred dyes,
Blue, purple, orange, pink, vermilion;
And there were quaint devices traced
All round in the Saracenic manner;
And the top, which gleamed like gold, was graced
With the drooping folds of a silken banner;
And on the poles, in silent pride,
There sat small doves of white enamel;
And the veil from the entrance was drawn aside,
And flung on the humps of a silver camel.
In short it was the sweetest thing
For a weary youth in a wood to light on;
And finer far than what a King
Built up, to prove his taste, at Brighton.

The gilded gate was all unbarred;
And, close beside it, for a guard,
There lay two dwarfs with monstrous noses,
Both fast asleep upon some roses.
Sir Rudolph entered; rich and bright
Was all that met his ravished sight;
Soft tapestries from far countries brought,
Rare cabinets with gems inwrought,
White vases of the finest mould,
And mirrors set in burnished gold.
Upon a couch a greyhound slumbered;
And a small table was encumbered

With paintings, and an ivory lute,
And sweetmeats, and delicious fruit.
Sir Rudolph lost no time in praising;
For he, I should have said, was gazing,
In attitude extremely tragic,
Upon a sight of stranger magic;
A sight, which, seen at such a season,
Might well astonish Mistress Reason,
And scare Dame Wisdom from her fences
Of rules and maxims, moods and tenses.

Beneath a crimson canopy,
  A lady, passing fair, was lying;
Deep sleep was on her gentle eye,
  And in her slumber she was sighing
Bewitching sighs, such sighs as say
  Beneath the moonlight, to a lover,
Things which the coward tongue by day
  Would not, for all the world, discover:
She lay like a shape of sculptured stone,
So pale, so tranquil:—she had thrown,
  For the warm evening's sultriness,
The bordered coverlet aside;
And nothing was there to deck or hide
  The glory of her loveliness,
But a scarf of gauze so light and thin
You might see beneath the dazzling skin,
And watch the purple streamlets go
Through the valleys of white and stainless snow,
  Or here and there a wayward tress,
Which wandered out with vast assurance
From the pearls that kept the rest in durance,
And fluttered about, as if 'twould try
To lure a zephyr from the sky.

"Bertha!" large drops of anguish came
On Rudolph's brow, as he breathed that name—
"Oh, fair and false one, wake, and fear!
I, the betrayed, the scorned, am here."
The eye moved not from its dull eclipse,
The voice came not from the fast-shut lips;
No matter! well that gazer knew
The tone of bliss, and the eyes of blue.

Sir Rudolph hid his burning face
With both his hands, for a minute's space,
And all his frame, in awful fashion,
Was shaken by some sudden passion.
What guilty fancies o'er him ran?
  Oh! pity will be slow to guess them;
And never, save to the holy man,
  Did good Sir Rudolph e'er confess them.
But soon his spirit you might deem
Came forth from the shade of the fearful dream;
His cheek, though pale, was calm again,
And he spoke in peace, though he spoke in pain:

"Not mine! not mine! now Mary, mother,
Aid me the sinful hope to smother!
Not mine, not mine!—I have loved thee long,
Thou hast quitted me with grief and wrong;
But pure the heart of a knight should be—
Sleep on, sleep on! thou art safe for me:
Yet shalt thou know by a certain sign
Whose lips have been so near to thine,
Whose eyes have looked upon thy sleep,
And turned away, and longed to weep,
Whose heart—mourn—madden as it will—
Has spared thee, and adored thee still!"

His purple mantle, rich and wide,
From his neck the trembling youth untied,
    And flung it o'er those dangerous charms,
    The swelling neck, and the rounded arms.
Once more he looked, once more he sighed;
And away, away from the perilous tent,
    Swift as the rush of an eagle's wing,
    Or the flight of a shaft from Tartar string,
Into the wood Sir Rudolph went:
Not with more joy the schoolboys run
To the gay green fields, when their task is done;—
Not with more haste the members fly,
When Hume has caught the Speaker's eye.

At last the daylight came; and then
A score or two of serving men,
Supposing that some sad disaster
Had happened to their lord and master,
Went out into the wood, and found him
Unhorsed, and with no mantle round him.
Ere he could tell his tale romantic,
The leech pronounced him clearly frantic,
So ordered him at once to bed,
And clapped a blister on his head.

Within the sound of the Castle clock
There stands a huge and rugged rock;
And I have heard the peasants say,
That the grieving groom at noon that day
Found gallant Roland cold and stiff,
At the base of the black and beetling cliff.

Beside the rock there is an oak,
Tall, blasted by the thunder-stroke;

And I have heard the peasants say,
That there Sir Rudolph's mantle lay,
And coiled in many a deadly wreath,
A venomous serpent slept beneath.

THE LEGEND OF THE HAUNTED TREE.

"DEEP is the bliss of the belted Knight,
When he kisses at dawn the silken glove,
And goes, in his glittering armour dight,
To shiver a lance for his lady-love!

Lightly he couches the beaming spear;
His mistress sits with her maidens by,
Watching the speed of his swift career,
With a whispered prayer, and a murmured sigh.

Far from me is the gazing throng,
The blazoned shield, and the nodding plume;
Nothing is mine but a worthless song,
A joyless life, and a nameless tomb."

"Nay, dearest Wilfred, lay like this,
On such an eve, is much amiss;
Our mirth beneath the new May moon
Should echoed be by livelier tune.
What need to thee of mail and crest,
Or foot in stirrup, spear in rest?
Over far mountains and deep seas,
Earth hath no fairer fields than these;
And who, in Beauty's gaudiest bowers,
Can love thee with more love than ours?"

The Minstrel turned with a moody look
  From that sweet scene of guiltless glee ;
From the old who talked beside the brook,
  And the young who danced beneath the tree.
Coldly he shrank from the gentle maid,
  From the chiding look and the pleading tone ;
And he passed from the old elm's hoary shade,
  And followed the forest path alone.
One little sigh, one pettish glance,—
  And the girl comes·back to her playmates now,
And takes her place in the merry dance,
  With a slower step and a sadder brow.

"My soul is sick," saith the wayward boy,
"Of the peasant's grief, and the peasant's joy.
I cannot breathe on from day to day,
Like the insects, which our wise men say
In the crevice of the cold rock dwell,
Till their shape is the shape of their dungeon cell;
In the dull repose of our changeless life,
I long for passion, I long for strife,
As in the calm the mariner sighs
For rushing waves and groaning skies.
Oh for the lists, the lists of fame !
Oh for the herald's glad acclaim !
For floating pennon, and prancing steed,
And Beauty's wonder at Manhood's deed !"

Beneath an ancient oak he lay ;
More years than man can count, they say,
On the verge of the dun and solemn wood,
Through sunshine and storm that oak had stood.
Many a loving, laughing sprite,
Tended the branches by day and by night,

And the leaves of its age were as fresh and as green
As the leaves of its early youth had been.
Pure of thought should the mortal be
Who sleeps beneath the Haunted Tree.
That night the Minstrel laid him down
Ere his brow relaxed its sullen frown ;
And slumber had bound his eyelids fast,
Ere the evil wish from his soul had passed.

A song on the sleeper's ear descended,
  A song it was pain to hear, and pleasure,
So strangely wrath and love were blended
  In every note of the mystic measure.

  "I know thee, child of earth ;
  The morning of thy birth,
In through the lattice did my chariot glide ;
  I saw thy father weep
  O'er thy first wild sleep,
I rocked thy cradle when thy mother died.

  And I have seen thee gaze
  Upon these birks and braes,
Which are my kingdoms, with irreverent scorn ;
  And heard thee pour reproof
  Upon the vine-clad roof,
Beneath whose peaceful shelter thou wert born.

  I bind thee in the snare
  Of thine unholy prayer ;
I seal thy forehead with a viewless seal :
  I give into thine hand
  The buckler and the brand,
And clasp the golden spur upon thy heel.

When thou hast made thee wise
In the sad lore of sighs,
When the world's visions fail thee and forsake
Return, return to me—
And to my haunted tree ;—
The charm hath bound thee now: Sir Knight, awake!"

Sir Isumbras, in doubt and dread,
From his feverish sleep awoke,
And started up from his grassy bed
Under the ancient oak.
And he called the page who held his spear,
And, "Tell me, boy," quoth he,
"How long have I been slumbering here,
Beneath the greenwood tree?"—

"Ere thou didst sleep, I chanced to throw
A stone into the rill ;
And the ripple that disturbed its flow
Is on its surface still.
Ere thou didst sleep, thou bad'st me sing
King Arthur's favourite lay ;
And the first echo of the string
Has hardly died away."

"How strange is sleep!" the young Knight said,
As he clasped the helm upon his head,
And, mounting again his courser black,
To his gloomy tower rode slowly back :
"How strange is sleep! when his dark spell lies
On the drowsy lids of human eyes,
The years of a life will float along
In the compass of a page's song.
Methought I lived in a pleasant vale,
The haunt of the lark and the nightingale,

Where the summer rose had a brighter hue,
And the noon-day sky a clearer blue,
And the spirit of man in age and youth
A fonder love, and a firmer truth.
And I lived on, a fair-haired boy,
In that sweet vale of tranquil joy;
Until at last my vain caprice
Grew weary of its bliss and peace.

And one there was, most dear and fair
Of all that smiled around me there,
A gentle maid, with a cloudless face,
And a form so full of fairy grace,
Who, when I turned with scornful spleen,
From feast in bower, or dance on green,
Would humour all my wayward will,
And love me, and forgive me still.
Even now, methinks, her smile of light
Is there before me, mild and bright;
And I hear her voice of fond reproof
Between the beats of my palfrey's hoof.
'Tis idle all: but I could weep;—
Alas!" said the Knight, "how strange is sleep!"

He struck with his spear the brazen plate
That gleamed before the castle gate;
The torch threw high its waves of flame,
As forth the watchful menials came;
They lighted the way to the banquet-hall;
They hung the shield upon the wall;
They spread the board, and they filled the bowl,
And the phantoms passed from his troubled soul.

Sir Isumbras was ever found
Where blows were struck for glory;

There sate not at the Table Round
  A Knight more famed in story.
The King on his throne would turn about
  To see his courser prancing;
And when Sir Launcelot was out,
  The Queen would praise his dancing.

He quite wore out his father's spurs,
  Performing valour's duties;
Destroying mighty sorcerers,
  Avenging injured beauties,
And crossing many a trackless sand,
  And rescuing people's daughters
From dragons that infest the land,
  And whales that walk the waters.
He throttled lions by the score,
  And giants by the dozen;
And, for his skill in lettered lore,
  They called him "Merlin's Cousin."

A score of steeds, with bit and rein,
  Stood ready in his stable;
An ox was every morning slain,
  And roasted for his table:
And he had friends, all brave and tall,
  And crowned with praise and laurel,
Who kindly feasted in his hall,
  And tilted in his quarrel;
And minstrels came and sang his fame
  In very rugged verses;
And they were paid with wine, and game,
  And rings, and cups, and purses.

And he loved a lady of high degree,
  Faith's fortress, Beauty's flower;

A countess for her maid had she,
  And a kingdom for her dower ;
And a brow whose frowns were vastly grand,
  And an eye of sunlit brightness ;
And a swan-like neck, and an arm and hand
  Of most bewitching whiteness ;
And a voice of music, whose sweet tones
  Could most divinely prattle
Of battered casques, and broken bones,
  And all the bliss of battle.
He wore her scarf in many a fray,
  He trained her hawks and ponies,
And filled her kitchen every day
  With leverets and conies ;
He loved, and he was loved again :—
  I won't waste time in proving,
There is no pleasure like the pain
  Of being loved, and loving.

Dame Fortune is a fickle gipsy,
And always blind, and often tipsy ;
Sometimes for years and years together,
She'll bless you with the sunniest weather,
Bestowing honour, pudding, pence,
You can't imagine why or whence ;—
Then in a moment—Presto, pass !—
Your joys are withered like the grass ;
You find your constitution vanish,
Almost as quickly as the Spanish ;
The murrain spoils your flocks and fleeces ;
The dry-rot pulls your house to pieces ;
Your garden raises only weeds ;
Your agent steals your title-deeds ;
Your banker's failure stuns the city ;
Your father's will makes Sugden witty ;

Your daughter, in her beauty's bloom,
Goes off to Gretna with the groom ;
And you, good man, are left alone,
To battle with the gout and stone.

Ere long, Sir Isumbras began
To be a sad and thoughtful man :
They said the glance of an evil eye
Had been on the Knight's prosperity :
Less swift on the quarry his falcon went,
Less true was his hound on the wild deer's scent,
And thrice in the lists he came to the earth
By the luckless chance of a broken girth.
And Poverty soon in her rags was seen
At the board where Plenty erst had been ;
And the guests smiled not as they smiled before,
And the song of the minstrel was heard no more ;
And a base ingrate, who was his foe,
Because, a little month ago,
He had cut him down, with friendly ardour,
From a rusty hook in an ogre's larder,
Invented an atrocious fable,
And libelled his fame at the royal table :
And she at last, the worshipped one,
For whom his valorous deeds were done,
Who had heard his vows, and worn his jewels,
And made him fight so many duels—
She too, when Fate's relentless wheel
Deprived him of the Privy Seal,
Bestowed her smiles upon another,
And gave his letters to her mother.

Fortune and fame—he had seen them depart,
With the silent pride of a valiant heart :
Traitorous friends—he had passed them by,

With a haughty brow and a stifled sigh.
Boundless and black might roll the sea,
O'er which the course of his bark must be ;
But he saw, through the storms that frowned above,
One guiding light, and the light was Love.
Now all was dark ; the doom was spoken !
His wealth all spent, and his heart half broken ;
Poor youth ! he had no earthly hope,
Except in laudanum, or a rope.

He ordered out his horse, and tried,
As the leech advised, a gentle ride ;
  A pleasant path he took,
Where the turf, all bright with the April showers,
Was spangled with a hundred flowers,
  Beside a murmuring brook.
Never before had he roved that way ;
And now, on a sunny first of May,
He chose the turning, you may guess,
Not for the laughing loveliness
Of turf, or flower, or stream ; but only
Because it looked extremely lonely.

He had wandered, musing, scarce a mile,
  In his melancholy mood,
When, peeping over a rustic stile,
He saw a little village smile,
  Embowered in thick wood.
There were small cottages, arrayed
In the delicate jasmine's fragrant shade ;
And gardens, whence the rose's bloom
Loaded the gale with rich perfume ;
And there were happy hearts ; for all
In that bright nook kept festival,

And welcomed in the merry May
With banquet and with roundelay.
Sir Isumbras sate gazing there,
With folded arms and mournful air ;
He fancied—'twas an idle whim—
That the village looked like a home to him.

And now a gentle maiden came,
Leaving her sisters and their game,
  And wandered up the vale ;
Sir Isumbras had never seen
A thing so fair except the Queen ;—
But out on Passion's doubts and fears !
Her beautiful eyes were full of tears ;
  Her cheeks were wan and pale.
None courted her stay of the joyous throng,
  As she passed from the group alone ;
And he listened,—which was very wrong,—
And heard her singing a lively song
  In a very dismal tone :

"Deep is the bliss of the belted Knight,
  When he kisses at dawn the silken glove,
And goes in his glittering armour dight,
  To shiver a lance for his lady-love !"

That thrilling voice, so soft and clear,
Was it familiar to his ear ?
And those delicious drooping eyes,
As blue and as pure as the summer skies ;
Had he, indeed, in other days,
Been blessed in the light of their holy rays ?

He knew not ; but his knee he bent
  Before her in most knightly fashion,

And grew superbly eloquent
  About her beauty, and his passion.
He said that she was very fair,
  And that she warbled like a linnet,
And that he loved her, though he ne'er
  Had looked upon her till that minute;
He grieved to mention that a Jew
  Had seized for debt his grand pavilion,
And he had little now, 'twas true,
  To offer, but a heart and pillion;

But what of that? In many a fight,—
  Though he who shouldn't say it, said it,—
He still had borne him like a knight,
  And had his share of blows and credit;
And if she would but condescend
  To meet him at the priest's to-morrow,
And be henceforth his guide, his friend,
  In every toil, in every sorrow,
They'd sail instanter from the Downs;
  His hands just now were quite at leisure;
And if she fancied foreign crowns,
  He'd win them,—with the greatest pleasure.

"A year is gone," the damsel sigh'd,
But blushed not, as she so replied,—
"Since one I loved,—alas, how well
He knew not, knows not,—left our dell.
Time brings to his deserted cot
No tidings of his after lot;
But his weal-or woe is still the theme
Of my daily thought, and my nightly dream.
Poor Alice is not proud or coy;
But her heart is with her minstrel boy."

Away from his arms the damsel bounded,
And left him more and more confounded.
He mused of the present, he mused of the past,
And he felt that a spell was o'er him cast;
He shed hot tears, he knew not why,
And talked to himself and made reply;
Till a calm o'er his troubled senses crept,
And, as the daylight waned, he slept.
Poor gentleman!—I need not say
Beneath an ancient oak he lay.

"He is welcome,"—o'er his bed
Thus the bounteous Fairy said:

"He has conned the lesson now;
He has read the book of pain:
There are furrows on his brow,
I must make it smooth again.

Lo, I knock the spurs away;
Lo, I loosen belt and brand;
Hark, I hear the courser neigh
For his stall in Fairy-land.

Bring the cap, and bring the vest;
Buckle on his sandal shoon;
Fetch his memory from the chest
In the treasury of the moon.

I have taught him to be wise,
For a little maiden's sake;—
Lo, he opens his bright eyes,
Softly, slowly:—Minstrel, wake!"

The sun has risen, and Wilfred is come
To his early friends, and his cottage home.
His hazel eyes and his locks of gold
Are just as they were in the time of old ;
But a blessing has been on the soul within,
For that is won from its secret sin,
More loving now, and worthier love
Of men below, and of saints above.
He reins a steed with a lordly air,
Which makes his country cousins stare ;
And he speaks in a strange and courtly phrase,
Though his voice is the voice of other days :
But where he has learned to talk and ride,
He will tell to none but his bonny Bride.

THE BRIDAL OF BELMONT.

A LEGEND OF THE RHINE.

WHERE foams and flows the glorious Rhine,
  Many a ruin, wan and grey,
O'erlooks the corn-field and the vine,
  Majestic in its dark decay.
Among their dim clouds, long ago,
They mocked the battles that raged below,
And greeted the guests in arms that came,
With hissing arrow and scalding flame.
But there is not one of the homes of pride
That frown on the breast of the peaceful tide,
Whose leafy walls more proudly tower
Than these, the walls of Belmont Tower.

Where foams and flows the glorious Rhine,
  Many a fierce and fiery lord
Did carve the meat, and pour the wine,
  For all that revelled at his board.
Father and son, they were all alike,
Firm to endure, and fast to strike;
Little they loved but a frou or a feast,
Nothing they feared but a prayer or a priest.
But there was not one in all the land
More trusty of heart, more stout of hand;
More valiant in field, or more courteous in bower,
Than Otto, the Lord of Belmont Tower.

Are you rich, single, and "your Grace?"
I pity your unhappy case.
Before you leave your travelling carriage,
The women have arranged your marriage;
Where'er your weary wit may lead you,
They pet you, praise you, fret you, feed you;
Consult your taste in wreaths and laces,
And make you make their book at races:
Your little pony, Tam O'Shanter,
Is found to have the sweetest canter;
Your curricle is quite reviving,
And Jane's so bold when you are driving!

Some recollect your father's habits,
And know the warren, and the rabbits!
The place is really princely—only
They're sure you'll find it vastly lonely:
You go to Cheltenham for the waters,
And meet the Countess and her daughters;
You take a cottage at Geneva—
Lo! Lady Anne and Lady Eva.

In horror of another session,
You just surrender at discretion,
And live to curse the frauds of mothers,
And envy all your younger brothers.

Count Otto bowed, Count Otto smiled,
When my Lady praised her darling child ;
Count Otto smiled, Count Otto bowed,
When the child those praises disavowed ;
As a knight should gaze, Count Otto gazed,
Where Bertha in all her beauty blazed ;
As a knight should hear, Count Otto heard,
When Liba sang like a forest bird ;
But he thought, I trow, about as long
Of Bertha's beauty and Liba's song,
As the sun may think of the clouds that play
O'er his radiant path on a summer day.
Many a maid had dreams of state,
As the Count rode up to her father's gate ;
Many a maid shed tears of pain,
As the Count rode back to his tower again ;
But little he cared, as it should seem,
For the sad, sad tear, or the fond, fond dream ;
Alone he lived—alone and free
As the owl that dwells in the hollow tree ;
And the Baroness said and the Baron swore,
That never was knight so shy before.

It was almost the first of May :
The sun, all smiles, had passed away ;
    The moon was beautifully bright ;
Earth, heaven, as usual in such cases,
Looked up and down with happy faces ;—
    In short it was a charming night.

And all alone, at twelve o'clock,
The young Count clambered down the rock,
Unfurled the sail, unchained the oar,
And pushed the shallop from the shore.
The holiness that sweet time flings
Upon all human thoughts and things,
When Sorrow checks her idle sighs,
And Care shuts fast her wearied eyes,—
The splendour of the hues that played
Fantastical o'er hill and glade,
As verdant slopes and barren cliff
Seemed darting by the tiny skiff,—
The flowers, whose faint tips, here and there,
Breathed out such fragrance, you might swear
That every soundless gale that fanned
The tide came fresh from fairy-land,—
The music of the mountain rill,
Leaping in glee from hill to hill,
To which some wild bird, now and then,
Made answer from her darksome glen,—
All this to him had rarer pleasure
Than jester's wit or minstrel's measure;
And, if you ever loved romancing,
Or felt extremely tired of dancing,
You'll hardly wonder that Count Otto
Left Lady Hildegonde's ridotto.

What melody glides o'er the starlit stream?
"Lurley!—Lurley!"
Angels of grace! does the young Count dream?
"Lurley!—Lurley!"
Or is the scene indeed so fair
That a nymph of the sea or a nymph of the air
Has left the home of her own delight,
To sing to our roses and rocks to-night?

"Lurley !—Lurley !"
Words there are none ; but the waves prolong
The notes of that mysterious song :
He listens, he listens ; and all around
Ripples the echo of that sweet sound,
"Lurley !—Lurley !"
No form appears on the river side ;
No boat is borne on the wandering tide ;
And the tones ring on, with nought to show
Or whence they come or whither they go ;
"Lurley !—Lurley !"
As fades one murmur on the ear,
There comes another, just as clear ;
And the present is like to the parted strain,
As link to link of a golden chain :
"Lurley !—Lurley !"
Whether the voice be sad or gay,
'Twere very hard for the Count to say ;
But pale are his cheeks, and pained his brow,
And the boat drifts on, he recks not how ;
His pulse is quick, and his heart is wild,
And he weeps, he weeps, like a little child.

O mighty music ! they who know
The witchery of thy wondrous bow,
Forget, when thy strange spells have bound them,
The visible world that lies around them.
When Lady Mary sings Rossini,
Or stares at spectral Paganini,
To Lady Mary does it matter
Who laugh, who love, who fawn, who flatter?
Oh no ! she cannot heed or hear
Reason or rhyme from prince or peer:
In vain for her Sir Charles denounces
The horror of the last new flounces ;

In vain the Doctor does his duty
By doubting of her rival's beauty ;
And if my Lord as usual raves
About the sugar or the slaves ;
Predicts the nation's future glories,
And chants the requiem of the Tories,
Good man,—she minds him just as much
As Marshal Gerard minds the Dutch.

Hid was the bright heaven's loveliness
  Beneath a sudden cloud,
As a bride might doff her bridal dress
  To don her funeral shroud ;
And over flood and over fell,
  With a wild and wicked shout,
From the secret cell where in chains they dwell,
  The joyous winds rushed out ;
And, the tall hills through, the thunder flew,
  And down the fierce hail came ;
And from peak to peak the lightning threw
  Its shafts of liquid flame.
The boat went down ; without delay,
The luckless boatman swooned away ;
And when, as a clear spring morning rose,
He woke in wonder from repose,
The river was calm as the river could be,
And the thrush was awake on the gladsome tree,
And there he lay, in a sunny cave,
On the margin of the tranquil wave,
Half deaf with that infernal din,
And wet, poor fellow, to the skin.

He looked to the left, and he looked to the right :
Why hastened he not, the noble Knight,

To dry his aged nurse's tears,
To calm his hoary butler's fears,
To listen to the prudent speeches
Of half-a-dozen loquacious leeches,
To swallow cordials circumspectly,
And change his dripping cloak directly?
With foot out-stretched, with hand up-raised,
In vast surprise he gazed and gazed.
Within a deep and damp recess
A maiden lay in her loveliness.
Lived she?—in sooth, 'twere hard to tell,
Sleep counterfeited Death so well.
A shelf of the rock was all her bed;
A ceiling of crystal was o'er her head;
Silken veil, nor satin vest,
Shrouded her form in its silent rest;
Only her long, long golden hair
About her lay like a thin robe there.
Up to her couch the young knight crept:
How very sound the maiden slept!
Fearful and faint the young knight sighed:
The echoes of the cave replied.
He leaned to look upon her face;
He clasped her hand in a wild embrace;
Never was form of such fine mould;
But the hands and the face were as white and cold
As they of the Parian stone were made
To which, in great Minerva's shade,
The Athenian sculptor's toilsome knife
Gave all of loveliness but life.
On her fair neck there seemed no stain
Where the pure blood coursed through the delicate vein;
And her breath, if breath indeed it were,
Flowed in a current so soft and rare,

It would scarcely have stirred the young moth's
wing
On the path of his noonday wandering—
Never on earth a creature trod
Half so lovely, or half so odd.

Count Otto stares till his eyelids ache,
And wonders when she'll please to wake;
While fancy whispers strange suggestions,
And wonder prompts a score of questions.
Is she a nymph of another sphere?
How came she hither? What doth she here?
Or if the morning of her birth
Be registered on this our earth,
Why hath she fled from her father's halls?
And where hath she left her cloaks and shawls?
There was no time for reason's lectures,
There was no time for wit's conjectures;
He threw his arm with timid haste
Around the maiden's slender waist,
And raised her up, in a modest way,
From the cold bare rock on which she lay:
He was but a mile from his castle gate,
And the lady was scarcely five stone weight;
He stopped in less than half-an-hour,
With his beauteous burden, at Belmont Tower.

Gay, I ween, was the chamber drest,
As the Count gave order for his guest;
But scarcely on the couch, 'tis said,
That gentle guest was fairly laid,
When she opened at once her great blue eyes,
And, after a glance of brief surprise,
Ere she had spoken, and ere she had heard
Of wisdom or wit a single word,

She laughed so long, and laughed so loud,
That Dame Ulrica often vowed
A dirge is a merrier thing by half
Than such a senseless, soulless laugh.
Around the tower the elfin crew
Seemed shouting in mirthful concert too ;
And echoed roof, and trembled rafter,
With that unsentimental laughter.
As soon as that droll tumult passed
The maiden's tongue, unchained at last,
Asserted all its female right,
And talked and talked with all its might.
Oh, how her low and liquid voice
Made the rapt hearer's soul rejoice !
'Twas full of those clear tones that start
From innocent childhood's happy heart,
Ere passion and sin disturb the well
In which their mirth and music dwell.
But man nor master could make out
What the eloquent maiden talked about ;
The things she uttered like did seem
To the bubbling waves of a limpid stream ;
For the words of her speech, if words they might be,
Were the words of the speech of a far countrie ;
And when she had said them o'er and o'er,
Count Otto understood no more
Than you or I of the slang that falls
From the dukes and dupes at Tattersall's,
Of Hebrew from a bearded Jew,
Of metaphysics from a Blue.

Count Otto swore,—Count Otto's reading
Might well have taught his better breeding,—
That, whether the maiden should fume or fret,
The maiden should not leave him yet ;

And so he took prodigious pains
To make her happy in her chains.
From Paris came a pair of cooks,
From Göttingen a load of books,
From Venice stores of gorgeous suits,
From Florence minstrels and their lutes :
The youth himself had special pride
In breaking horses for his bride ;
And his old tutor, Dr. Hermann,
Was brought from Bonn to teach her German.

And there in her beauty and her grace
  The wayward maiden grew ;
And every day of her form and face
  Some charm seemed fresh and new.
Over her cold and colourless cheek
  The blush of the rose was shed,
And her quickened pulse began to speak
  Of human hope and dread ;
And soon she grasped the learned lore
  The grey old pedant taught,
And turned from the volume to explore
  The hidden mine of thought.
Alas ! her bliss was not the same
  As it was in other years,
For with new knowledge sorrow came,
  And with new passion tears.
Oft, till the Count came up from wine,
  She would sit by the lattice high,
And watch the windings of the Rhine
  With a very wistful eye ;
And oft on some rude cliff she stood,
  Her light harp in her hand,
And still, as she looked on the gurgling flood,
  She sang of her native land.

And when Count Otto pleaded well
  For priest, and ring, and vow,
She heard the knight that fond tale tell,
  With a pale and pensive brow:
"Henceforth my spirit may not sleep,
  As ever till now it has slept;
Henceforth mine eyes have learned to weep,
  As never till now they wept.
Twelve months, dear Otto, let me grieve
  For my own, my childhood's home,
Where the sun at noon, or the frost at eve,
  Did never dare to come;
And when the spring its smiles recalls,
  Thy maiden will resign
The holy hush of her father's halls
  For the stormy joys of thine."
But where that father's halls?—vain, vain;
  She threw her sad eyes down;
And if you dared to ask again,
  She answered with a frown.
Some people have a knack, we know
Of saying things *mal à propos*,
And making all the world reflect
On what it hates to recollect.
They talk to misers of their heir,
To women of the times that were,
To ruined gamblers of the box,
To thin defaulters of the stocks,
To cowards of their neighbours' duels;
To Hayne of Lady H.'s jewels,
To poets of the wrong Review,
And to the French of Waterloo.
The Count was not of these; he never
Was half so clumsy, half so clever;
And when he found the girl had rather

Say nothing more about her father,
He changed the subject—told a fable—
Believed that dinner was on table—
Or whispered, with an air of sorrow,
That it would surely rain to-morrow.

The winter storms went darkly by,
And, from a blue and cloudless sky,
Again the sun looked cheerfully
  Upon the rolling Rhine;
And spring brought back to the budding flowers
Its genial light and freshening showers,
And music to the shady bowers,
  And verdure to the vine.
And now it is the first of May;
For twenty miles round all is gay:
Cottage and Castle keep holiday;
  For how should sorrow lower
On brow of rustic or of knight,
When heaven itself looks all so bright,
Where Otto's wedding feast is dight
  In the hall of Belmont Tower?

Stately matron and warrior tall
Come to the joyous festival;
Good Count Otto welcomes all,
  As through the gate they throng;
He fills to the brim the wassail cup:
In the bright wine pleasure sparkles up,
  And draughts and tales grow long;
But grizzly knights are still and mute,
And dames set down the untasted fruit,
When the bride takes up her golden lute,
  And sings her solemn song.

"A voice ye hear not, in mine ear is crying :—
What does the sad voice say?
'Dost thou not heed thy weary father's sighing?
Return, return to-day!
Twelve moons have faded now:
My daughter, where art thou?'

Peace! in the silent evening we will meet thee,
Grey ruler of the tide!
Must not the lover with the loved one greet thee,
The bridegroom with his bride?
Deck the dim couch aright,
The Bridal couch, to-night."

The nurses to the children say
That, as the maiden sang that day,
The Rhine to the heights of the beetling tower
Sent up a cry of fiercer power,
And again the maiden's cheek was grown
As white as ever was marble stone,
And the bridesmaid her hand could hardly hold,
Its fingers were so icy cold.

Rose Count Otto from the feast,
As entered the hall the hoary Priest.
A stalwart warrior, well I ween,
That hoary Priest in his youth had been,
But the might of his manhood he had given
To peace and prayer, the Church and Heaven.
For he had travelled o'er land and wave;
He had kneeled on many a martyr's grave;
He had prayed in the meek St. Jerome's cell,
And had tasted St. Anthony's blessed well;
And reliques round his neck had he,
Each worth a haughty kingdom's fee;

Scrapings of bones, and points of spears,
And vials of authentic tears,
From a prophet's coffin a hallowed nail,
And a precious shred of our Lady's veil.
And therefore at his awful tread
The powers of darkness shrank with dread;
And Satan felt that no disguise
Could hide him from those chastened eyes.
He looked on the bridegroom, he looked on the bride,
The young Count smiled, but the old Priest sighed.

"Fields with the father I have won;
I am come in my cowl to bless the son.
Count Otto, ere thou bend the knee,
What shall the hire of my service be?"

"Greedy hawk must gorge his prey;
Pious priest must grasp his pay.
Name the guerdon, and so to the task;
Thine it is, ere thy lips can ask!"

He frowned as he answered—"Gold and gem,
Count Otto, little I reck of them;
But your bride has skill of the lute, they say;
Let her sing me the song I shall name to-day."

Loud laughed the Count: "And if she refuse
The ditty, Sir Priest, thy whim shall choose,
Row back to the house of old St. Goar:
I never bid priest to a bridal more."

Beside the maiden he took his stand;
He gave the lute to her trembling hand;

She gazed around with a troubled eye ;
The guests all shuddered, and knew not why ;
It seemed to them as if a gloom
Had shrouded all the banquet-room,
Though over its boards and over its beams
Sunlight was glowing in merry streams.

The stern Priest throws an angry glance
On that pale creature's countenance ;
Unconsciously her white hand flings
Its soft touch o'er the answering strings ;
The good man starts with a sudden thrill,
And half relents from his purposed will ;
But he signs the cross on his aching brow,
And arms his soul for its warfare now.

"Mortal maid, or goblin fairy,
Sing me, I pray thee, an Ave Mary !"

Suddenly the maiden bent
O'er the gorgeous instrument ;
But of song the listeners heard
Only one wild mournful word—
  "Lurley,—Lurley !"
And when the sound in the liquid air
  Of that brief hymn had faded,
Nothing was left of the nymph who there
  For a year had masqueraded,
But the harp in the midst of the wide hall set
  Where her last strange word was spoken ;—
The golden frame with tears was wet,
  And all the strings were broken.

POEMS, Etc.

CHIVALRY AT A DISCOUNT.

"Des traditions étrangeres,
En parlant sans obscurité
Mais dans ces sources mensongères,
Necherchons point la verite."—GRESSET.

"Nous avons changé tout cela."—MOLIERE.

LILY, I've made a sketch, to show
How all the world will alter
The tournament in Ivanhoe,
As painted by Sir Walter;
Those jousting days have all gone by,
And heaven be praised they're over!
"When brains were out, the man would die,"
A swain may now recover!

Yet, Lily! Love has still his darts,
And Beauty still her glances;
Her trophies now are wounded hearts,
Instead of broken lances!
Soft tales are told, though not with flowers,
But in a simple letter,
And on the whole, this world of ours
Is altered for the better!

Your stalwart chiefs, and men of might,
  Though fine poetic sketches,
Contrasted with a modern knight,
  Were sad, unpolished wretches;
They learned, indeed, to poise a dart,
  Or breathe a bold defiance,
But "reading" was a mystic art,
  And "writing" quite a science!

Our heroes still wear spur on heel,
  And falchion, cap, and feather;
But for your surcoats made of steel,
  And doublets made of leather,—
Good heavens! just fancy, at a ball,
  How very incommodious!
And then, they never shaved at all—
  'Twas positively odious!

A warrior wasted half his life
  In wild crusades to Mecca,
In previous penance for a wife,
  Like Jacob for Rebecca!
Or captive, held some twenty years
  At Tunis or Aleppo,
Came back, perchance, without his ears,
  A yellow fright, like Beppo!

Then heads were made to carry weight,
  And not to carry knowledge;
Boys were not "brought up for the state,"
  Girls were not sent to college;
Now (oh! how this round world improves!)
  We've "Essays" by mechanics,
"Courses" of wisdom with removes,
  And ladies' calisthenics!

In the olden time, when youth had fled,
  A lady's life was over;
For might she not as well be dead
  As live without a lover?
But now, no foolish date we fix,
  So brisk *our* Hymen's trade is,
Ladies are now at fifty-six
  But "elderly *young* ladies."

And husbands now, with bolts and springs,
  Ne'er cage and frighten Cupid,
They know that if they clip his wings,
  They only make him stupid;
Their married ladies had no lutes
  To sigh beneath their windows,
They treated them, those ancient brutes,
  As cruelly as Hindoos!

They moped away their lives, poor souls!
  By no soft vision brightened,
Perched up in castle pigeon-holes,
  Expecting to be frightened!
Or hauled away through field, or fray,
  To dungeon, or to tower;
They ne'er were neat for half a day,
  Or safe for half an hour.

'Twas easy too, by fraud or force,
  A wife's complaints to stifle;
To starve her was a thing of course,—
  To poison her a trifle!
Their wrongs remain no longer dumb,
  For now the laws protect them;
And canes "no thicker than one's thumb"
  Are suffered to correct them.

Then dwell not, Lily ! on an age
  Of Fancy's wild creation,
Our own presents a fairer page
  For Beauty's meditation ;
Though you share no Bois Guilbert's bed,
  No Front de Bœuf's vagaries,
You *may* be comfortably wed
  Some morning at St. Mary's !

THE CONJURER.

"Marry come up ! I can see as far into a wall as another !"

If you'll tell me the reason why Lucy de Vere
  Thinks no more of her silks, or her satins ;
If you'll tell me the reason why, cloudy or clear,
  She goes both to vespers and matins :
Then I think I can tell why young Harry de Vaux,
  Who once cared for naught but his wine, has
Been seen, like a saint, for a fortnight or so,
  In a niche, at St. Thomas Aquinas !

If you'll tell me the reason Sir Rowland will ride
  As though he'd a witch on his crupper,
Whenever he hopes to join Rosalie's side,
  Or is going to meet her at supper ;
Then I think I can tell how it is that his groom,
  With a horse that is better and faster,
Though the coaches make way, and the people make room,
  Can never keep up with his master !

If you'll tell me the reason why Isabel's eyes
  Sparkle brighter than Isabel's rubies;
If you'll tell me the reason why Isabel's sighs
  Turn sensible men into boobies:
Then I think I can tell,—when she promised last night
  To waltz, and my eye turned to thank hers,—
Why it was that my heart felt so wondrously light,
  Though I hadn't a sou at my bankers!

If you'll tell me the reason a maiden *must* sigh
  When she looks at a star or a planet;
If you'll tell me the reason she flings her book by,
  When you know she has hardly began it;
If her cheek has grown pale, and if dim is her eye,
  And her breathing both fevered and faint is,
Then think it *exceedingly* likely that I
  Can tell what that maiden's complaint is!

COUSINS.

"L'Hymen, dit-on, craint les petits Cousins."—SCRIBE.

HAD you ever a Cousin, Tom?
  Did your Cousin happen to sing?
Sisters we've all by the dozen, Tom,
  But a Cousin's a different thing:
And you'd find, if you ever had kissed her, Tom,
  (But let this be a secret between us,)
That your lips would have been a blister, Tom,
  For they're not of the Sister genus.

There is something, Tom, in a Sister's lip,
  When you give her a good-night kiss,

That savours so much of relationship
  That nothing occurs amiss ;
But a Cousin's lip if you once unite
  With yours, in the quietest way,
Instead of sleeping a week that night,
  You'll be dreaming the following day.

And people think it no harm, Tom,
  With a Cousin to hear you talk ;
And no one feels any alarm, Tom,
  At a quiet, cousinly walk ;—
But, Tom, you'll soon find what I happen to know,
  That such walks often grow into straying,
And the voices of Cousins are sometimes so low,
  Heaven only knows what you'll be saying !

And then there happen so often, Tom,
  Soft pressures of hands and fingers,
And looks that were moulded to soften, Tom,
  And tones on which memory lingers ;
That long ere the walk is half over, those strings
  Of your heart are all put in play,
By the voice of those fair, demi-sisterly things,
  In not quite the most brotherly way.

And the song of a Sister may bring to you, Tom,
  Such tones as the angels woo,
But I fear if your Cousin should sing to you, Tom,
  You'll take her for an angel, too ;
For so curious a note is that note of theirs,
  That you'll fancy the voice that gave it
Has been all the while singing the National Airs,
  Instead of the Psalms of David.

I once had a Cousin who sung, Tom,
  And her name may be nameless now,
But the sound of those songs is still young, Tom,
  Though we are no longer so :
'Tis folly to dream of a bower of green
  When there is not a leaf on the tree ;—
But 'twixt walking and singing, that Cousin has been,
  God forgive her ! the ruin of me.

And now I care nought for society, Tom,
  And lead a most anchorite life,
For I've loved myself into sobriety, Tom,
  And out of the wish for a wife ;
But oh ! if I said but half what I might say,
  So sad were the lesson 'twould give,
That 'twould keep you from loving for many a day,
  And from Cousins—as long as you live.

BAGATELLES !

I SAW one day, near Paphos' bowers,
  In a glass—sweet Fancy's own—
A boy lie down among the flowers
  That circled Beauty's throne.
Poor youth ! it moved my pity quite,
  He looked so very sad ;—
Apollo said "his head was light,"
  But Pallas called him "mad."
A little sylphid, hiding near,
  Flew out from some blue-bells,
And whispered in the pale youth's ear,
  "Pray, try our Bagatelles !

"You've pondered over those musty books
  Till half your locks are grey ;—
You've dimmed your eyes, you've spoiled your looks,
  You've worn yourself away !
Leave Wisdom's leaden page awhile,
  And take your lute again,
And Beauty's eyes shall round you smile,
  And Love's repay the strain :
Leave politics to dull M.P.'s,
  Philosophy to cells,—
Good youth !—you'll ne'er succeed in these—
  So try our Bagatelles !

"We've cures in these enchanted bowers
  For every sort of ill,—
Our only medicines are flowers,
  Sweet flowers that never kill !
Our leeches, too, are wondrous wise
  In mixing simples up,—
We've frozen dew-drops from the skies
  For the fevered lover's cup ;
We've moonbeams gathered on the hills,
  And star-drops in the dells ;
Aud we never send you in our bills—
  Pray, try our Bagatelles !

"And youths from every court and clime
  Come here to seek advice,
And maids who have misspent their time
  Are kept preserved—in ice !
Bright fountains in our gardens play,
  And each has magic in it,—
We cure blue devils every day,
  Blue stockings every minute :

And heartaches when they're worst, and when
  No other medicine tells,
In maids or matrons, youths or men,
  Yield to our—Bagatelles !

" Last week a statesman came, whose eyes
  Scarce knew what sweet repose is,
We gave one draught of Beauty's sighs,—
  Look there—how calm he dozes !
A lawyer called the week before,
  Who talked of naught but Blackstone,
We took him to our sylphid store,
  And a pair of wings we waxed on ;
And if you'll look in yonder grove,—
  Just by that grot of shells,—
You'll find him making shocking love,
  And talking—Bagatelles ! "

The sick youth raised his drooping head
  As the sylphid ceased to speak,—
" Hush, hush," she cried, " you must to bed,
  And be quiet for a week ! "
And soon a Muse, with rainbow wings,
  And looks of laughing joy,
Came with a lute of silver strings ;
  And she sat beside the boy :
And when I saw them last they lay
  Far up those flowery dells,
And the boy was growing glad and gay
  As she sung him—Bagatelles !

THERE'S NOTHING NEW BENEATH THE SUN.

(*The Brazen Head.*)

THE world pursues the very track
  Which it pursued at its creation;
And mortals shrink in horror back
  From any hint of innovation;
From year to year the children do
  Exactly what their sires have done;
Time is! time was!—there's nothing new,—
  There's nothing new beneath the sun!

Still lovers hope to be believed,
  Still clients hope to win their causes;
Still plays and farces are received
  With most encouraging applauses;
Still dancers have fantastic toes,
  Still dandies shudder at a dun;
Still diners have their fricandeaus,—
  There's nothing new beneath the sun!

Still cooks torment the hapless eels,
  Still boys torment the dumb cockchafers;
Lord Eldon still adores the seals,
  Lord Clifford still adores the wafers;
Still asses have enormous ears,
  Still gambling bets are lost and won;
Still opera dancers marry peers,—
  There's nothing new beneath the sun!

Still women are absurdly weak,
  Still infants dote upon a rattle;
Still Mr. Martin cannot speak
  Of anything but beaten cattle;
Still brokers swear the shares will rise,
  Still Cockneys boast of Manton's gun;

Still listeners swallow monstrous lies,—
  There's nothing new beneath the sun!

Still genius is a jest to earls,
  Still honesty is down to zero;
Still heroines have spontaneous curls,
  Still novels have a handsome hero;
Still Madame Vestris plays a man,
  Still fools adore her, I for one;
Still youths write sonnets to a fan,—
  There's nothing new beneath the sun!

Still people make a plaguey fuss,
  About all things that don't concern them,
As if it matters aught to us,
  What happens to our grandsons, burn them!
Still life is nothing to the dead,
  Still Folly's toil is Wisdom's fun;
And still, except the Brazen Head,—
  There's nothing new beneath the sun!

PEACE BE THINE.

When Sorrow moves with silent tread
  Around some mortal's buried dust,
And muses on the mouldering dead
  Who sleep beneath their crumbling bust,
Though all unheard and all unknown
The name on that sepulchral stone,
  She looks on its recording line,
  And whispers kindly, "Peace be thine!"

O Lady! me thou knowest not,
  And what I am, or am to be;

The pain and pleasure of my lot
  Are nought, and must be nought, to thee;
Thou seest not my hopes and fears;
Yet thou, perhaps, in other years,
  Wilt look on this recording line,
  And whisper kindly, "Peace be thine!"

THE CONFESSION OF DON CARLOS.*

(Imitated from the Spanish.)

O TELL me not of broken vow—
I speak a firmer passion now;
O tell me not of shattered chain—
The link shall never burst again!
My soul is fixed as firmly here
As the red sun in his career,
As victory on Mina's crest
Or tenderness in Rosa's breast;
Then do not tell me, while we part,
Of fickle flame and roving heart;
While youth shall bow at beauty's shrine,
That flame shall glow—that heart be thine.

Then wherefore dost thou bid me tell
The fate thy malice knows so well?
I may not disobey thee!—yes!
Thou bidst me—and I *will* confess:
See how adoringly I kneel:
Hear how my folly I reveal:
My folly!—chide me if thou wilt,
Thou shalt not, canst not, call it guilt:—
And when my faithlessness is told,
Ere thou hast time to play the scold,

* This and the following poems first appeared in the *Etonian*.

I'll haste the fond rebuke to check,
And lean upon the snowy neck,
Play with its glossy auburn hair,
And hide the blush of falsehood there.

Inez, the innocent and young,
First shared my heart, and waked my song;
We were both harmless, and untaught
To love as fashionables ought;
With all the modesty of youth
We talked of constancy and truth,
Grew fond of music and the moon,
And wandered on the nights of June
To sit beneath the chesnut tree,
While the lonely stars shone mellowly,
Shedding a pale and dancing beam
On the wave of Guadalquivir's stream.
And aye we talked of faith and feelings,
With no distrustings, no concealings;
And aye we joyed in stolen glances,
And sighed, and blushed, and read romances.
Our love was ardent and sincere,
And lasted, Rosa—half a-year!
And then the maid grew fickle-hearted,—
Married Don Josè—so we parted.
At twenty-one I've often heard
My bashfulness was quite absurd;
For, with a squeamishness uncommon,
I feared to love a married woman.

Fair Leonora's laughing eye
Again awaked my song and sigh:
A gay intriguing dame was she,
And fifty Dons of high degree,
That came and went as they were bid,

Dubbed her the Beauty of Madrid.
Alas! what constant pains I took
To merit one approving look!
I courted valour and the muse,
Wrote challenges and billets-doux;
Paid for sherbet and serenade,
Fenced with Pegru and Alvarade;
Fought all the bull-fights like a hero,
Studied small talk and the Bolero:
Played the guitar—and played the fool,
That out of tune—this out of rule.
I oft at midnight wandered out,
Wrapt up in love and my capoté,
To muse on beauty and the skies,
Cold winds—and Leonora's eyes.

Alas! when all my gains were told,
I'd caught a Tartar—and a cold.
And yet, perchance, that lovely brow
Had still detained my captive vow—
That clear blue eye's enchanting roll
Had still enthralled my yielding soul,—
But suddenly a vision bright
Came o'er me in a veil of light,
And burst the bonds whose fetters bound me,
And brake the spell that hung around me,
Recalled the heart that madly roved,
And bade me love, and be beloved.
Who was it broke the chain and spell?
Dark-eyed Castilian! *thou* canst tell!

And am I faithless!—woe the while!
What vow but melts at Rosa's smile?
For broken vows, and faith betrayed,
The guilt is thine, Castilian maid!

The tale is told, and I am gone:
Think of me, loved and only one,
When none on earth shall care beside
How Carlos lived, or loved, or died!
Thy love on earth shall be to me
A bird upon a leafless tree,
A bark upon a hopeless wave,
A lily on a tombless grave,
A cheering hope, a living ray,
To light me on a weary way.

And thus is love's confession done:
Give me thy parting benison;
And, ere I rise from bended knee,
To wander o'er a foreign sea
Alone and friendless,—ere I don
My pilgrim's hat and sandal shoon,
Dark-eyed Castilian! let me win
Forgiveness sweet for venial sin;
Let lonely sighs, and dreams of thee,
Be penance for my perjury!

MARRIAGE.

WHAT, what is Marriage? Harris, Priscian!
Assist me with a definition.—
"Oh!" cries a charming silly fool,
Emerging from her boarding-school—
"Marriage is—love without disguises,
It is a—something that arises
From raptures and from stolen glances,
To be the end of all romances;

Vows—quarrels—moonshine—babes—but hush !
I mustn't have you see me blush."

"Pshaw !" says a modern modish wife,
"Marriage is splendour, fashion, life ;
A house in town, and villa shady,
Balls, diamond bracelets, and 'my lady ;'
Then for finale, angry words,
Some people's—'obstinate's—'absurds !'
And peevish hearts, and silly heads,
And oaths, and *bêtes*, and separate beds."

An aged bachelor, whose life
Has just been sweetened with a wife,
Tells out the latent grievance thus :
"Marriage is—odd ! for one of us
'Tis worse a mile than rope or tree,
Hemlock, or sword, or slavery ;
An end at once to all our ways,
Dismission to the one-horse chaise ;
Adieu to Sunday car, and pig,
Adieu to wine, and whist, and wig ;
Our friends turn out,—our wife's are clapt in ;
'Tis 'Exit crony,'—'Enter captain !'
Then hurry in a thousand thorns,—
Quarrels, and compliments,—and horns.
This is the yoke, and I must wear it ;
Marriage is—hell, or something near it !"

"Why, marriage," says an exquisite,
Sick from the supper of last night,
"Marriage is—after one by me !
I promised Tom to ride at three.—
Marriage is—'gad ! I'm rather late ;
La Fleur—my stays ! and chocolate !—

Marriage is—really, though, 'twas hard
To lose a thousand on a card;
Sink the old Duchess!—three revokes!
'Gad! I must fell the abbey oaks:
Mary has lost a thousand more!—
Marriage is—'gad! a cursed bore!"

Hymen, who hears the blockheads groan,
Rises indignant from his throne,
And mocks their self-reviling tears,
And whispers thus in Folly's ears:
"O frivolous of heart and head!
If strifes infest your nuptial bed,
Not Hymen's hand, but guilt and sin,
Fashion and folly, force them in;
If on your couch is seated Care,
I did not bring the scoffer there;
If Hymen's torch is feebler grown,
The hand that quenched it was your own;
And what I am, unthinking elves,
Ye all have made me for yourselves!"

THE BACHELOR.*

T. QUINCE, ESQ., TO THE REV. MATTHEW PRINGLE.

YOU wonder that your ancient friend
Has come so near his journey's end,
And borne his heavy load of ill
O'er Sorrow's slough, and Labour's hill,

* This and the following poems were published in the *Etonian*.

Without a partner to beguile
The toilsome way with constant smile,
To share in happiness and pain,
To guide, to comfort, to sustain,
And cheer the last long weary stage
That leads to Death through gloomy Age !
To drop these metaphoric jokes,
And speak like reasonable folks,
It seems you wonder, Mr. Pringle,
That old Tom Quince is living single !

Since my old crony and myself
Laid crabbed Euclid on the shelf,
And made our *congé* to the Cam,
Long years have passed ; and here I am
With nerves and gout, but yet alive,
A Bachelor, and fifty-five.—
Sir, I'm a Bachelor, and mean
Until the closing of the scene,
Or be it right, or be it wrong,
To play the part I've played so long,
Nor be the rat that others are,
Caught by a ribbon or a star.

"As years increase," your worship cries,
"All troubles and anxieties
Come swiftly on : you feel vexation
About your neighbours, or the nation ;
The gout in fingers or in toes
Awakes you from your first repose ;
You'll want a clever nurse, when life
Begins to fail you—take a wife !
Believe me, from the mind's disease
Her soothing voice might give you ease,

And, when the twinge comes shooting through you,
Her care might be of service to you !"
Sir, I'm not dying, though I know
You charitably think me so ;—
Not dying yet, though you, and others,
In augury your learned brothers,
Take pains to prophesy events
Which lie some twenty winters hence.
Some twenty ?—look ! you shake your head
As if I were insane or dead,
And tell your children and your wife—
" Old men grow *very* fond of life ! "
Alas ! you prescience never ends
As long as it concerns your friends ;
But your own fifty-third December
Is what you never can remember !
And when I talk about my health
And future hopes of weal or wealth,
With something 'twixt a grunt and groan
You mutter in an undertone—
" Hark ! how the dotard chatters still ! *
He'll not believe he's old or ill !
He goes on forming great designs,—
Has just laid in a stock of wines,—
And promises his niece a ball,
As if grey hairs would never fall !
I really think he's all but mad."
Then, with a wink and sigh, you add,

* I must confess that Dr. Swift
Has lent me here a little lift ;
For when I steal some trifling hits
From older and from brighter wits,
I have some touch of conscience left,
And seldom like to hide the theft.
This is *my* plan !—I name no name,
But wish all others did the same.

"Tom is a friend I dearly prize,
But—never thought him *over* wise!"

You—who are clever to foretell
Where ignorance might be as well—
Would marvel how my health has stood:
My pulse is firm, digestion good,
I walk to see my turnips grow,
Manage to ride a mile or so,
Get to the village church to pray,
And drink my pint of wine a day;
And often, in an idle mood,
Emerging from my solitude,
Look at my sheep, and geese, and fowls,
And scare the sparrows and the owls,
Or talk with Dick about my crops,
And learn the price of malt and hops.

You say that when you saw me last
My appetite was going fast,
My eye was dim, my cheek was pale,
My bread—and stories—both were stale;
My wine and wit were growing worse,
And all things else,—except my purse;
In short, the very blind might see
I was not what I used to be.

My glass (which I believe before ye)
Will teach me quite another story;
My wrinkles are not many yet,
My hair is still as black as jet;
My legs are full, my cheeks are ruddy,
My eyes, though somewhat weak by study,

Retain a most vivacious ray,
And tell no stories of decay;
And then my waist, unvexed, unstayed,
By fetters of the tailor's trade,
Tells you, as plain as waist can tell,
I'm most unfashionably well.

And yet you think I'm growing thinner!—
You'd stare to see me eat my dinner!
You know that I was held by all
The greatest epicure in Hall,
And that the voice of Granta's sons
Styled me the Gourmand of St. John's:—
I have not yet been found unable
To do my duty to my table,
Though at its head no lady gay
Hath driven British food away,
And made her hapless husband bear
Alike her fury and her fare.
If some kind-hearted chum calls in,
An extra dish and older bin
And John in all his finery drest
Do honour to the welcome guest;
And then we talk of other times,
Of parted friends, and distant climes,
And lengthened converse, tale, and jest,
Lull every anxious care to rest;
And when unwillingly I rise
With newly wakened sympathies
From conversation—and the bowl,
The feast of stomach—and of soul,
I lay me down, and seem to leap
O'er forty summers in my sleep;
And youth, with all its joy and pain,
Comes rushing on my soul again.

I rove where'er my boyhood roved—
I love whate'er my boyhood loved—
And rocks, and vales, and woods, and streams,
Fleet o'er my pillow in my dreams.

'Tis true, some ugly foes arise,
E'en in this earthly paradise,
Which you, good Pringle, may beguile,
By Mrs. P's unceasing smile;
I am an independent elf,
And keep my comforts in myself.
If my best sheep have got the rot—
Or if the Parson hits a blot—
Or if young witless prates of laurel—
Or if my tithe produces quarrel—
Or if my roofing wants repairs—
Or if I'm angry with my heirs—
Or if I've nothing else to do—
I grumble for an hour or two;
Riots or rumours unrepressed,
My niece—or knuckle—over-drest,
The lateness of a wished-for post,
Miss Mackrell's story of the ghost,
New wine, new fashions, or new faces,
New bills, new taxes, or new places,
Or Mr. Hume's enumeration
Of all the troubles of the nation,
Will sometimes wear my patience out!
Then, as I said before, the gout—
Well, well, my heart was never faint!
And yet it might provoke a saint.
A rise of bread, or fall of rain,
Sometimes unite to give me pain;
And oft my lawyer's bag of papers
Gives me a taste of spleen and vapours.

Angry or sad, alone or ill,
I have my senses with me still;
Although my eyes are somewhat weak,
Yet can I dissipate my pique,
By Poem, Paper, or Review;
And though I'm dozy in my pew
At Dr. Poundtext's second leaf,
I am not yet so very deaf
As to require the rousing noise
Of screaming girls and roaring boys.
Thrice—thrice accursed be the day
When I shall fling my bliss away,
And, to disturb my quiet life,
Take discord in the shape of wife!
Time, in his endless muster-roll,
Shall mark the hour with blackest coal,
When old Tom Quince shall cease to see
The *Chronicle* with toast and tea,
Confine his rambles to his park,
And never dine till after dark,
And change his comfort and his crony
For crowd and conversazione.

If every aiding thought is vain,
And momentary grief and pain
Urge the old man to frown and fret,
He has another comfort yet;
This earth has thorns, as poets sing,
But not for ever can they sting;
Our sand from out its narrow glass
Rapidly passes!—let it pass!
I seek not, I, to check or stay
The progress of a single day,
But rather cheer my hours of pain,
Because so few of them remain.

Care circles every mortal head,—
The dust will be a calmer bed!
From Life's alloy no life is free,
But—Life is not Eternity!

When that unerring day shall come
To call me, from my wandering, home,—
The dark and still and painful day
When breath shall fleet in groans away,
When comfort shall be vainly sought,
And doubt shall be in every thought,
When words shall fail th' unuttered vow,
And fever heat the burning brow,
When the dim eye shall gaze, and fear
To close the glance that lingers here,
Snatching the faint departing light
That seems to flicker in its flight,
When the lone heart, in that long strife,
Shall cling unconsciously to life,—
I'll have no shrieking female by
To shed her drops of sympathy;
To listen to each smothered throe,
To feel, or feign, officious woe,
To bring me every useless cup,
And beg "dear Tom" to drink it up,
To turn my oldest servants off,
E'en as she hears my gurgling cough;
And then expectantly to stand,
And chafe my temples with her hand,
And pull a cleaner night-cap o'er 'em,
That I may die with due decorum;
And watch the while my ebbing breath,
And count the tardy steps of death;
Grudging the leech his growing bill,
And wrapt in dreams about the will.

I'll have no Furies round my bed !—
They shall not plague me—till I'm dead.

Believe me ! ill my dust would rest,
If the plain marble o'er my breast,
That tells, in letters large and clear,
"THE BONES OF THOMAS QUINCE LIE HERE !"
Should add a talisman of strife,
"ALSO THE BONES OF JOAN, HIS WIFE !"
No ! while beneath this simple stone
Old Quince shall sleep, and sleep alone,
Some village Oracle, who well
Knows how to speak, and read, and spell,
Shall slowly construe, bit by bit,
My "*Natus*" and my "*Obiit*,"
And then, with sage discourse and long,
Recite my virtues to the throng :—

"The Gentleman came straight from College ;
A most prodigious man for knowledge !
He used to pay all men their due,
Hated a miser—and a Jew ;
But always opened wide his door
To the first knocking of the poor.
None, as the grateful parish knows,
Save the Churchwardens, were his foes ;
They could not bear the virtuous pride
Which gave the sixpence they denied.
If neighbours had a mind to quarrel,
He used to treat them to a barrel ;
And that, I think, was sounder law
Than any book I ever saw.
The ladies never used to flout him ;
But this was rather strange about him :

That, gay or thoughtful, young or old,
He took no wife for love or gold;
Women he called 'a pretty thing,'
But never could abide a ring!"

Good Mr. Pringle!—you must see
Your arguments are light with me;
They buzz like feeble flies around me,
But leave me firm, as first they found me.
Silence your logic! burn your pen!
The poet says, "We all are men;"
And all "condemned alike to groan"—
You with a wife, and I with none.
Well! yours may be a happier lot,
But it is one I envy not;
And you'll allow me, Sir, to pray
That, at some near-approaching day,
You may not have to wince and whine,
And find some cause to envy mine!

HOW TO RHYME FOR LOVE.

At the last hour of Fannia's rout,
When Dukes walked in, and lamps went out,
Fair Chloe sat; a sighing crowd
Of high adorers round her bowed,
And ever flattery's incense rose
To lull the idol to repose.
Sudden some Gnome that stood unseen,
Or lurked disguised in mortal mien,
Whispered in Beauty's trembling ear
The word of bondage and of fear—

"Marriage!"—her lips their silence broke,
And smiled on Vapid as they spoke,—
"I hate a drunkard or a lout,
I hate the the sullens and the gout;
If e'er I wed—let danglers know it—
I wed with no one but a poet."

And who but feels a poet's fire
When Chloe's smiles, as now, inspire?
Who can the bidden verse refuse
When Chloe is his verse and Muse?
  Thus Flattery whispered round;
And straight the humorous fancy grew,
That lyres are sweet when hearts are true;
And all who feel a lover's flame
Must rhyme to-night on Chloe's name;
And he's unworthy of the dame
    Who silent here is found.
Since head must plead the cause of heart,
Some put their trust in answer smart
    Or pointed repartee;
Some joy that they have hoarded up
Those genii of the jovial cup,
    Chorus, and catch, and glee;
And for one evening all prepare
To be "Apollo's chiefest care."

Then Vapid rose—no Stentor this,
    And his no Homer's lay;
Meek victim of antithesis,
    He sighed and died away:—
"Despair my sorrowing bosom rives,
    And anguish on me lies
Chloe may die, while Vapid lives,
    Or live while Vapid dies!

You smile !—the horrid vision flies,
And Hope this promise gives ;
I cannot live while Chloe dies,
Nor die while Chloe lives ! "

Next, Snaffle, foe to tears and sadness,
Drew fire from Chloe's eyes ;
And warm with drunkenness and madness,
He started for the prize.
" Let the glad cymbals loudly clash,
Full bumpers let's be quaffing !
No poet I !—Hip, hip !—here goes !
Blow,—blow the trumpet, blow the——"
Here he was puzzled for a rhyme,
And Lucy whispered " nose " in time,
And so they fell a-laughing.

" Gods ! " cried a minister of State,
" You know not, Empress of my fate,
How long my passion would endure,
If passion were a sinecure ;
But since, in Love's despotic clime,
Fondness is taxed, and pays in rhyme,
Glad to retire, I shun disgrace,
And make my bow, and quit my place."

And thus the jest went circling round,
And ladies smiled and sneered,
As smooth fourteen and weak fourscore
Professed they ne'er had rhymed before,
And drunkards blushed, and doctors swore,
And soldiers owned they feared ;
Unwonted Muses were invoked
By pugilists and whips,

And many a belle looked half provoked,
When favoured swains stood dumb and choked;
And warblers whined, and punsters joked,
And dandies bit their lips.

At last an old Ecclesiastic,
Who looked half kind and half sarcastic,
And seemed in every transient look
At once to flatter and rebuke,
Cut off the sport with "Pshaw! enough:"
And then took breath,—and then took snuff:
"Chloe," he said, "you're like the moon;
You shine as bright, you change as soon;
Your wit is like the moon's fair beam,
In borrowed light 'tis over us thrown;
Yet, like the moon's, that sparkling stream
To careless eyes appears your own;
Your cheek by turns is pale and red,
And then to close the simile,
(From which methinks you turn your head,
As half in anger, half in glee,)
Dark would the night appear without you,
And—twenty fools have rhymed about you!"

SURLY HALL.

"Mercy o' me, what a multitude are here!
They grow still, too; from all parts they are coming,
As if we kept a fair here."

—*Shakespeare.*

THE sun hath shed a mellower beam,
Fair Thames, upon thy silver stream,

And air and water, earth and heaven,
Lie in the calm repose of even.
How silently the breeze moves on,
Flutters, and whispers, and is gone!
How calmly does the quiet sky
Sleep in its cold serenity!
Alas! how sweet a scene were here
For shepherd or for sonnetteer;
How fit the place, how fit the time,
For making love, or making rhyme!
But though the sun's descending ray
Smiles warmly on the close of day,
'Tis not to gaze upon his light
That Eton's sons are here to-night;
And though the river, calm and clear,
Makes music to the poet's ear,
'Tis not to listen to the sound
That Eton's sons are thronging round:
The sun unheeded may decline—
Blue eyes send out a brighter shine;
The wave may cease its gurgling moan—
Glad voices have a sweeter tone;
For in our calendar of bliss
We have no hour so gay as this,
When the kind hearts and brilliant eyes
Of those we know, and love, and prize,
Are come to cheer the captive's thrall,
And smile upon his festival.

Stay, Pegasus!—and let me ask
Ere I go onward in my task,—
Pray, reader, were you ever here,
Just at this season of the year?
No!—then the end of next July
Should bring you, with admiring eye,

To hear us *row*, and see us row,
And cry, "How fast *them* boys *does* go!"
For Father Thames beholds to-night
A thousand visions of delight;
Tearing and swearing, jeering, cheering,
Lame steeds to right and left careering,
Displays, dismays, disputes, distresses,
Ruffling of temper and of dresses;
Wounds on the heart—and on the knuckles;
Losing of patience—and of buckles.
An interdict is laid on Latin,
And scholars smirk in silk and satin,
And dandies start their thinnest pumps,
And Michael Oakley's in the dumps;
And there is nought beneath the sun
But dash, and splash, and falls, and fun.

Lord! what would be the Cynic's mirth,
If fate would lift him to the earth,
And set his tub, with magic jump,
Squat down beside the Brocas Clump!
What scoffs the sage would utter there
From his unpolished elbow-chair,
To see the sempstress' handiwork,
The Greek confounded with the Turk,
Parisian mixed with Piedmontese,
And Persian joined to Portuguese;
And mantles short, and mantles long,
And mantles right, and mantles wrong,
Mis-shaped, mis-coloured, and mis-placed
With what the tailor calls a *taste!*
And then the badges and the boats,
The flags, the drums, the paint, the coats;
But more than these, and more than all,
The puller's intermitted call—

"Easy!"—"Hard all!"—"Now pick her up!"—
"Upon my life, how I shall sup!"
Would be a fine and merry matter
To wake the sage's love of satire.
Kind readers, at my laughing age
I thank my stars I'm not a sage;
I, an unthinking, scribbling elf,
Love to please others—and myself;
Therefore I fly *a malo joco*,
But like *desipere in loco*.
Excuse me, that I wander so;
All modern pens digress, you know.
Now to my theme! Thou Being gay,
Houri or goddess, nymph or fay,
Whoe'er—whate'er—where'er thou art—
Who, with thy warm and kindly heart,
Hast made these blest abodes thy care,—
Being of water, earth, or air,—
Beneath the moonbeam hasten hither,
Enjoy thy blessings ere they wither,
And witness with thy gladdest face
The glories of thy dwelling-place!

The boats put off; throughout the crowd
The tumult thickens; wide and loud
The din re-echoes; man and horse
Plunge onward in their mingled course.
Look at the troop! I love to see
Our real Etonian cavalry:
They start in such a pretty trim,
And such sweet scorn of life and limb.
I must confess I never found
A horse much worse for being sound;
I wish my nag not wholly blind,
And like to have a tail behind;

And though he certainly may hear
Correctly with a single ear,
I think, to look genteel and neat,
He ought to have his two complete.
But these are trifles !—off they go
Beside the wondering river's flow ;
And if, by dint of spur and whip,
They shamble on without a trip,
Well have they done ! I make no question
They're shaken into good digestion.

I and my Muse—my Muse and I—
Will follow with the company,
And get to Surly Hall in time
To make a supper, and a rhyme.
Yes ! while the animating crowd,
The gay, and fair, and kind, and proud,
With eager voice and eager glance,
Wait till the pageantry advance,
We'll throw around a hasty view,
And try to get a sketch or two.

First in the race is William Tag,
Thalia's most industrious fag ;
Whate'er the subject he essays
To dress in never-dying lays,
A chief, a cheese, a dearth, a dinner,
A cot, a castle, cards, Corinna,
Hibernia, Baffin's Bay, Parnassus,
Beef, Bonaparte, beer, Bonassus—
Will hath his ordered words, and rhymes
For various scenes and various times ;
Which suit alike for this or that,
And come, like volunteers, quite *pat*.
He hath his elegy, or sonnet,

For Lucy's bier, or Lucy's bonnet;
And celebrates with equal ardour
A monarch's sceptre, or his larder.
Poor William, when he wants a hint,
All other poet's are his mint;
He coins his epic or his lyric,
His satire or his panegyric,
From all the gravity and wit
Of what the ancients thought and writ.
Armed with his Ovid and his Flaccus
He comes like thunder to attack us;
In pilfered mail he bursts to view,
The cleverest thief I ever knew.
Thou noble Bard! at any time
Borrow my measure and my rhyme;
Borrow (I'll cancel all the debt)
An epigram or epithet;
Borrow my mountains, or my trees,
My paintings, or my similes;
Nay, borrow all my pretty names,
My real or my fancied flames;
Eliza, Alice, Leonora,
Mary, Melina, and Medora;
And borrow all my "mutual vows,"
My "ruby lips," and "cruel brows,"
And all my stupors and my startings,
And all my meetings, and my partings;
Thus far, my friend, you'll find me willing;
Borrow all things save one—a shilling!

Drunken, and loud, and mad, and rash,
Joe Tarrell wields his ceaseless lash;
The would-be sportsman; o'er the sides
Of the lank charger he bestrides
The foam lies painfully, and blood

Is trickling in a ruddier flood
Beneath the fury of the steel,
Projecting from his armed heel.
E'en from his childhood's earliest bloom,
All studies that become a groom
Eton's *spes gregis*, honest Joe,
Or knows, or would be thought to know;
He picks a hunter's hoof quite finely,
And spells a horse's teeth divinely.
Prime terror of molesting duns,
Sole judge of greyhounds and of guns,
A skilful whip, a steady shot,
Joe swears he is !—who says he's not?
And then he has such knowing faces
For all the week of Ascot races,
And talks with such a mystic speech,
Untangible to vulgar reach,
Of Sultan, Highflyer, and Ranter,
Potatoes, Quiz, and Tam O'Shanter,
Bay colts and brown colts, sires and dams,
Bribings and bullyings, bets and bams;
And how the favourite *should* have won,
And how the little Earl was *done;*
And how the filly failed in strength,
And how some faces grew in length;
And how some people—if they'd show—
Know something more than others know.
Such is his talk; and while we wonder
At that interminable thunder,
The undiscriminating snarler
Astounds the ladies in the parlour,
And broaches at his mother's table
The slang of kennel and of stable.
And when he's drunk, he roars before ye
One excellent unfailing story,

About a gun, Lord knows how long,
With a discharge, Lord knows how strong,
Which always needs an oath and frown
To make the monstrous dose go down.
O ! oft and oft the Muses pray
That wondrous tube may burst some day,
And then the world will ascertain
Whether its master hath a brain !
Then, on the stone that hides his sleep,
These accents shall be graven deep,—
Or "Upton" and "C. B."* between
Shine in the *Sporting Magazine;*—
"Civil to none, except his brutes ;
Polished in nought, except his boots ;
Here lie the relics of Joe Tarrell :
Also, Joe Tarrell's double-barrel !"

Ho !—by the muttered sounds that slip
Unwilling from his curling lip ;
By the grey glimmer of his eye,
That shines so unrelentingly ;
By the stern sneer upon his snout,
I know the critic, Andrew Crout !
The boy-reviler ! amply filled
With venomed virulence, and skilled
To look on what is good and fair
And find or make a blemish there.
For Fortune to his cradle sent
Self-satisfying discontent,
And he hath caught from cold Reviews
The one great talent, to abuse ;
And so he sallies sternly forth,
Like the cold Genius of the North,
To check the heart's exuberant fulness,
And chill good-humour into dulness :

* Two constant supporters of that instructive miscellany.

Where'er he comes, his fellows shrink
Before his awful nod and wink ;
And wheresoe'er these features plastic
Assume the savage or sarcastic,
Mirth stands abashed, and Laughter flies,
And Humour faints, and Quibble dies.
How sour he seems !—and hark ! he spoke ;
We'll stop and listen to the croak ;
'Twill charm us, if these happy lays
Are honoured by a fool's dispraise !—
"You think the boats well manned this year !
To you they may perhaps appear !—
I who have seen those frames of steel,
Tuckfield, and Dixon, and Bulteel,
Can swear—no matter what I swear—
Only things are not as they were !
And then our cricket !—think of that !
We ha'n't a tolerable bat ;
It's very true, that Mr. Tucker,
Who puts the field in such a pucker,
Contrives to make his fifty runs ;—
What then ?—we had a Hardinge once !
As for our talents, where are they ?
Griffin and Grildrig had their day ;
And who's the star of modern time ?
Octosyllabic Peregrine ;
Who pirates, puns, and talks sedition,
Without a moment's intermission ;
And if he did not get a lift
Sometimes from *me*—and Doctor Swift,
I can't tell what the deuce he'd do !—
But this, you know, is *entre nous !*
I've tried to talk him into taste,
But found my labour quite misplaced ;
He nibs his pen, and twists his ear,

And says he's deaf and cannot hear ;
And if I mention right or rule,—
Egad ! he takes me for a fool ! "

Gazing upon this varied scene
With a new artist's absent mien,
I see thee silent and alone,
My friend, ingenious Hamilton.
I see thee there—(nay, do not blush !)
Knight of the Pallet and the Brush,
Dreaming of straight and crooked lines,
And planning portraits and designs.
I like him hugely !—well I wis,
No despicable skill is his,
Whether his sportive canvas shows
Arabia's sands or Zembla's snows,
A lion, or a bed of lilies,
Fair Caroline, or fierce Achilles ;
I love to see him taking down
A schoolfellow's unconscious frown,
Describing twist, grimace, contortion,
In most becoming disproportion,
While o'er his merry paper glide
Rivers of wit ; and by his side
Caricatura takes her stand,
Inspires the thought and guides the hand ;
I love to see his honoured books
Adorned with rivulets and brooks ;
Troy frowning with her ancient towers,
Or Ida gay with fruit and flowers ;
I love to see fantastic shapes,
Dragons and griffins, birds and apes,
And pigmy forms and forms gigantic,
Forms natural, and forms romantic,
Of dwarf and ogres, dames and knights,

Scrawled by the side of Homer's fights,
And portraits daubed on Maro's poems,
And profiles penned to Tulley's Proems ;
In short, I view with partial eyes
Whate'er my brother painter tries.
To each belongs his own utensil ;
I sketch with pen, as he with pencil ;
And each, with pencil or with pen,
Hits off a likeness now and then.
He drew *me* once—the spiteful creature !
'Twas voted—"like in every feature ;"
It might have been so !—('twas lopsided,
And squinted worse than ever I did :)
However, from that hapless day,
I owed the debt, which here I pay ;
And now I'll give my friend a hint :—
Unless you want to shine in print,
Paint lords and ladies, nymphs and fairies,
And demi-gods, and dromedaries ;
But never be an author's creditor,
Nor paint the picture of an Editor !

Who is the youth with stare confounded,
And tender arms so neatly rounded,
And moveless eyes, and glowing face,
And attitude of studied grace ?
Now Venus, pour your lustre o'er us !
Your would-be servant stands before us !
Hail, Corydon ! let others blame
The fury of his fictioned flame ;
I love to hear the beardless youth
Talking of constancy and truth,
Swearing more darts are in his liver
Than ever gleamed in Cupid's quiver,
And wondering at those hearts of stone

Which never melted like his own.
Ah ! when I look on Fashion's moth,
Wrapt in his visions and his cloth,
I would not, for a nation's gold,
Disturb the dream—or spoil the fold !

And who the maid, whose gilded chain,
Hath bound the heart of such a swain ?
Oh ! look on those surrounding graces !
There is no lack of pretty faces ;
M——l, the goddess of the night,
Looks beautiful with all her might ;
And M——, in that simple dress,
Enthralls us more by studying less ;
D——, in your becoming pride,
Ye march to conquest, side by side ;
And A——, thou fleetest by
Bright in thine arch simplicity ;
Slight are the links thy power hath wreathed ;
Yet, by the tone thy voice hath breathed,
By thy glad smile and ringlets curled,
I would not break them for the world !
But this is idle ! Paying court
I know was never yet my forte ;
And all I say of nymph and queen,
To cut it short, can only mean
That when I throw my gaze around
I see much beauty on the ground.

Hark ! hark ! a mellowed note
Over the water seemed to float !
Hark ! the note repeated !
A sweet, and soft, and soothing strain
Echoed, and died, and rose again,
As if the Nymphs of Fairy reign

Were holding to-night their revel rout,
And pouring their fragrant voices out,
    On the blue water seated.
Hark to the tremulous tones that flow,
And the voice of the boatmen as they row,
Cheerfully to the heart they go,
    And touch a thousand pleasant strings
Of triumph and pride, and hope and joy,
And thoughts that are only known to boy,
    And young imaginings!
The note is near, the voice comes clear,
And we catch its echo on the ear
    With a feeling of delight;
And, as the gladdening sounds we hear,
There's many an eager listener here,
    And many a straining sight.

    One moment,—and ye see
Where, fluttering quick, as the breezes blow,
Backwards and forwards, to and fro,
Bright with the beam of retiring day,
Old Eton's flag, on its watery way,
    Moves on triumphantly!
But what that ancient poets have told
Of Amphitrite's car of gold,
With the Nymphs behind, and the Nymphs before,
And the Nereid's song, and the Triton's roar,
    Could equal half the pride
That heralds the Monarch's plashing oar
    Over the swelling tide?
And look!—they land those gallant crews,
With their jackets light, and their bellying trews;
And Ashley walks applauded by,
With a world's talent in his eye;

And Kinglake, dear to poetry,
    And dearer to his friends ;
Hibernian Roberts, you are there,
With that unthinking, merry stare
    Which still its influence lends
To make us drown our devils blue,
In laughing at ourselves,—and you !
Still I could lengthen out the tale,
And sing Sir Thomas with his ale
    To all that like to read ;
Still I could choose to linger long
Where Friendship bids the willing song
    Flow out for honest Meade !

Yet e'en on this triumphant day
    One thought of grief will rise ;
And though I bid my fancy play,
And jest and laugh through all the lay,
Yet sadness still will have its way,
    And burst the vain disguise !
Yes ! when the pageant shall have passed,
I shall have looked upon my last ;
I shall not e'er behold again
Our pullers' unremitted strain ;
Nor listen to the charming cry
Of contest or of victory
That speaks what those young bosoms feel,
As keel is pressing fast on keel ;
Oh ! bright these glories still shall be,
But they shall never dawn for me !

E'en when a realm's congratulation
Sang Pæans for the Coronation,
Amidst the pleasure that was round me,
A melancholy spirit found me ;

And while all else were singing "Io!"
I couldn't speak a word but "Heigh-ho!"
And so, instead of laughing gaily,
I dropped a tear,—and wrote my "Vale."

VALE!

Eton, the Monarch of thy prayers
E'en now receives his load of cares;
Throned in the consecrated choir
He takes the sceptre of his sire,
And wears the crown his father wore,
And swears the oath his father swore,
And therefore sounds of joy resound,
Fair Eton, on thy classic ground.
A gladder gale is round thee breathed;
And on thy mansions thou hast wreathed
A thousand lamps, whose various hue
Waits but the night to burst to view.
Woe to the poets that refuse
To wake and woo their idle Muse,
When those glad notes, "God save the King,"
From hill, and vale, and hamlet ring!
Hark, how the loved inspiring tune
Peals forth from every loyal loon
Who loves his country, and excels
In drinking beer or ringing bells!
It is a day of shouts and greeting;
A day of idleness and eating;
And triumph swells in every soul,
And mighty beeves are roasted whole,
And ale, unbought, is set a-running,
And pleasure's hymn grows rather stunning,
And children roll upon the green,
And cry, "Confusion to the Queen!"

And Sorrow flies, and Labour slumbers ;
And Clio pours her loudest numbers ;
And hundreds of that joyous throng
With whom my life hath lingered long
Give their glad raptures to the gale,
In one united echoing "Hail !"

I took the harp, I smote the string,
I strove to soar on Fancy's wing,
And murmur in my sovereign's praise
The latest of my boyhood's lays.
Alas ! the theme was too divine
To suit so weak a Muse as mine :
I saw—I felt it could not be ;
No song of triumph flows from me ;
The harp from which those sounds ye ask
Is all unfit for such a task ;
And the last echo of its tone,
Dear Eton, must be thine alone !

A few short hours, and I am borne
Far from the fetters I have worn ;
A few short hours, and I am free !—
And yet I shrink from liberty,
And look, and long to give my soul
Back to thy cherishing control.
Control ? Ah no ! thy chain was meant
Far less for bond than ornament ;
And though its links are firmly set,
I never found them gall me yet.
Oh still, through many chequered years,
'Mid anxious toils, and hopes, and fears,
Still I have doted on thy fame,
And only gloried in thy name.

How I have loved thee ! Thou hast been
My Hope, my Mistress, and my Queen ;
I always found thee kind, and thou
Hast never seen me weep—till now.

I knew that time was fleeting fast,
I knew thy pleasures could not last ;
I knew too well that riper age
Must step upon a busier stage ;
Yet when around thine ancient towers
I passed secure my tranquil hours,
Or heard beneath thine aged trees
The drowsy humming of the bees,
Or wandered by thy winding stream,
I would not check my fancy's dream ;
Glad in my transitory bliss,
I recked not of an hour like this ;
And now the truth comes swiftly on,
The truth I would not think upon,
The last sad thought, so oft delayed,—
"These joys are only born to fade."

Ye Guardians of my earliest days,
Ye Patrons of my earliest lays,
Custom reminds me, that to you
Thanks and farewell to-day are due.
Thanks and farewell I give you,—not
(As some that leave this holy spot)
In laboured phrase and polished lie
Wrought by the forge of flattery,
But with a heart that cannot tell
The half of what it feels so well.
If I am backward to express,
Believe, my love is not the less ;
Be kind as you are wont, and view

A thousand thanks in one Adieu.
My future life shall strive to show
I wish to pay the debt I owe;
The labours that ye give to May
September's fruits shall best repay.
And you, my friends, who loved to share
Whate'er was mine of sport or care,
Antagonists at fives or chess,
Friends in the play-ground or the press,
I leave ye now; and all that rests
Of mutual tastes, and loving breasts,
In the lone vision that shall come,
Where'er my studies and my home,
To cheer my labour and my pain
And make me feel a boy again.

Yes! when at last I sit me down,
A scholar, in my cap and gown,—
When learned doctrines, dark and deep,
Move me to passion or to sleep,—
When Clio yields to logic's wrangles,
And Long and Short give place to angles,—
When stern Mathesis makes it treason
To like a rhyme, or scorn a reason—
With aching head and weary wit
Your parted friend shall often sit,
Till Fancy's magic spell hath bound him,
And lonely musings flit around him;
Then shall ye come with all your wiles,
Of gladdening sounds and warming smiles,
And nought shall meet his eye or ear,—
Yet shall he deem your souls are near.

Others may clothe their valediction
With all the tinsel charms of fiction;

And one may sing of Father Thames,
And Naiads with a hundred names,
And find a Pindus here, and own
The College pump a Helicon,
And search for gods about the College,
Of which old Homer had no knowledge;
And one may eloquently tell
The triumphs of the Windsor belle,
And sing of Mira's lips and eyes,
In oft-repeated ecstasies.
Oh! he hath much and wondrous skill
To paint the looks that wound and kill,
As the poor maid is doomed to brook,
Unconsciously, her lover's look,
And smiles, and talks, until the poet
Hears the band play, and does not know it.
To speak the plain and simple truth,—
I always was a jesting youth,
A friend to merriment and fun,
No foe to quibble and to pun;
Therefore I cannot feign a tear;
And, now that I have uttered here
A few unrounded accents, bred
More from the heart than from the head,
Honestly felt, and plainly told,
My lyre is still, my fancy cold.

MY FIRST FOLLY.

(*Stanzas written at Midnight.*)

PRETTY Coquette, the ceaseless play
Of thine unstudied wit,
And thy dark eye's remembered ray
By buoyant fancy lit,
And thy young forehead's clear expanse,
Where the locks slept, as through the dance,
Dreamlike, I saw thee flit,
Are far too warm, and far too fair
To mix with aught of earthly care;
But the vision shall come when my day is done,
A frail and a fair and a fleeting one!

And if the many boldly gaze
On that bright brow of thine,
And if thine eye's undying rays
On countless coxcombs shine,
And if thy wit flings out its mirth,
Which echoes more of air than earth,
For other ears than mine,
I heed not this; ye are fickle things,
And I like your very wanderings;
I gaze, and if thousands share the bliss,
Pretty Capricious! I heed not this.

In sooth I am a wayward youth,
As fickle as the sea,
And very apt to speak the truth,
Unpleasing though it be;
I am no lover; yet as long
As I have heart for jest or song,
An image, sweet, of thee,

Locked in my heart's remotest treasures,
Shall ever be one of its hoarded pleasures;—
This from the scoffer thou hast won,
And more than this he gives to none.

SONGS FROM THE TROUBADOUR.*

I.

(FROM CANTO I.)

"My mother's grave, my mother's grave!
Oh! dreamless is her slumber there,
And drowsily the banners wave
O'er her that was so chaste and fair;
Yea! love is dead, and memory faded!
But when the dew is on the brake,
And silence sleeps on earth and sea,
And mourners weep, and ghosts awake,
Oh! then she cometh back to me,
In her cold beauty darkly shaded!

"I cannot guess her face or form;
But what to me is form or face?
I do not ask the weary worm
To give me back each buried grace
Of glistening eyes, or trailing tresses!
I only feel that she is here,
And that we meet, and that we part;
And that I drink within mine ear,
And that I clasp around my heart,
Her sweet still voice, and soft caresses!

* First published in Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*.

"Not in the waking thought by day,
  Not in the sightless dream by night,
Do the mild tones and glances play,
  Of her who was my cradle's light!
But in some twilight of calm weather
  She glides, by fancy dimly wrought,
    A glittering cloud, a darkling beam,
  With all the quiet of a thought,
    And all the passion of a dream,
Linked in a golden spell together!"

II.

Spirits, that walk and wail to-night,
  I feel, I feel that ye are near;
There is a mist upon my sight,
  There is a murmur in mine ear,
    And a dark, dark dread
    Of the lonely dead
  Creeps through the whispering atmosphere!

Ye hover o'er the hoary trees,
  And the old oaks stand bereft and bare;
Ye hover o'er the moonlight seas,
  And the tall masts rot in the poisoned air;
    Ye gaze on the gate
    Of earthly state,
  And the ban dog shivers in silence there.

Come hither to me upon your cloud,
  And tell me of your bliss or pain,
And let me see your shadowy shroud,
  And colourless lip, and bloodless vein;
    Where do ye dwell,
    In heaven or hell?
  And why do ye wander on earth again?

Tell me where and how ye died,
  Fell ye in darkness, or fell ye in day,
On lorn hill-side, or roaring tide,
  In gorgeous feast, or rushing fray?
    By bowl or blow,
    From friend or foe,
  Hurried your angry souls away?

Mute ye come, and mute ye pass,
  Your tale untold, your shrift unshriven;
But ye have blighted the pale grass,
  And scared the ghastly stars from heaven;
    And guilt hath known
    Your voiceless moan,
  And felt that the blood is unforgiven!

III.

(FROM CANTO II.)

Oh fly with me! 'tis Passion's hour;
    The world is gone to sleep;
And nothing wakes in brake or bower,
    But those who love and weep:
This is the golden time and weather,
When songs and sighs go out together,
And minstrels pledge the rosy wine
To lutes like this, and lips like thine!

Oh fly with me! my courser's flight
    Is like the rushing breeze,
And the kind moon has said "Good night!"
The lover's voice—the loved one's ear—
There's nothing else to speak or hear;

And we will say, as on we glide,
That nothing lives on earth beside!

Oh fly with me! and we will wing
Our white skiff o'er the waves,
And hear the Tritons revelling
Among their coral caves;
The envious Mermaid, when we pass,
Shall cease her song, and drop her glass;
For it will break her very heart,
To see how fair and dear thou art.

Oh fly with me! and we will dwell
Far over the green seas,
Where sadness rings no parting knell
For moments such as these!
Where Italy's unclouded skies
Look brightly down on brighter eyes,
Or where the wave-wed City smiles,
Enthroned upon her hundred isles.

Oh fly with me! by these sweet strings
Swept o'er by Passion's fingers,
By all the rocks, and vales, and springs
Where Memory lives and lingers,
By all the tongue can never tell,
By all the heart has told so well,
By all that has been or may be,
And by Love's self—Oh fly with me!

IV.

Fare thee well, fare thee well,
Most beautiful of earthly things!
I will not bid thy spirit stay,

Nor link to earth those glittering wings,
  That burst like light away!
    I know that thou art gone to dwell
In the sunny home of the fresh day-beam,
  Before decay's unpitying tread
Hath crept upon the dearest dream
  That ever came and fled;
    Fare thee well, fare thee well;
And go thy way, all pure and fair,
  Into the starry firmament;
And wander there with the spirits of air,
  As bright and innocent!

    Fare thee well, fare thee well!
Strange feet will be upon thy clay,
  And never stop to sigh or sorrow;
Yet many wept for thee to-day,
  And one will weep to-morrow:
    Alas! that melancholy knell
Shall often wake my wondering ear,
  And thou shalt greet me for awhile,
Too beautiful to make me fear,
  Too sad to let me smile!
    Fare thee well, fare thee well!
I know that heaven for thee is won!
  And yet I feel I would resign
Whole ages of my life, for one—
  One little hour, of thine!

    Fare thee well, fare thee well!
See, I have been to the sweetest bowers,
  And culled from garden and from heath
The tenderest of all tender flowers,
  And blended in my wreath
    The violet and the blue harebell,

And one frail rose in its earliest bloom ;
  Alas ! I meant it for thy hair,
And now I fling it on thy tomb,
  To weep and wither there !
    Fare ye well, fare ye well !
Sleep, sleep, my love, in fragrant shade,
  Droop, droop, to-night, thou blushing token ;
A fairer flower shall never fade,
  Nor a fonder heart be broken !

V.

(FROM CANTO III.)

Clotilda ! many hearts are light,
  And many lips dissemble ;
But I am thine till priests shall fight,
  Or Cœur de Lion tremble !—
Hath Jerome burned his rosary,
  Or Richard shrunk from slaughter ?
        Oh ! no, no,
        Dream not so !
But till you mean your hopes to die,
  Engrave them not in water !

Sweet Ida, on my lonely way
  Those tears I will remember,
Till icicles shall cling to May,
  Or roses to December !—
Are snow-wreaths bound on Summer's brow ?
  Is drowsy Winter waking ?
        Oh ! no, no,
        Dream not so !
But lances, and a lover's vow,
  Were only made for breaking.

Lenora, I am faithful still,
  By all the saints that listen,
Till this warm heart shall cease to thrill,
  Or these wild veins to glisten !—
This bosom,—is its pulse less high ?
  Or sleeps the storm within it ?
        Oh ! no, no,
        Dream not so !
But lovers find eternity
  In less than half a minute.

And thus to thee I swear to-night,
  By thine own lips and tresses,
That I will take no further flight,
  Nor break again my jesses :
And wilt thou trust the faith I vowed,
  And dream in spite of warning ?
        Oh ! no, no,
        Dream not so !
But go and lure the midnight cloud,
  Or chain the mist of morning.

These words of mine, so false and bland,
  Forget that they were spoken !
The ring is on thy radiant hand,—
  Dash down the faithless token !
And will they say that Beauty sinned,
  That Woman turned a rover ?
        Oh ! no, no,
        Dream not so !
But lovers' vows are like the wind—
  And Vidal is a Lover.

THE SEPARATION.

"Lorsque l' on aime comme il faut
Le moindre éloignement nous tue
Et ce, dont on chérit la vue
Ne revièn jamais assez tôt."—MOLIERE.

HE's gone, dear Fanny !—gone at last—
We've said good-bye—and all is over ;
'Twas a gay dream—but it is past—
Next Tuesday he will sail from Dover.
Well ! gentle waves be round his prow !
But tear and prayer alike are idle ;
Oh ! who shall fill my album now ?
And who shall hold my pony's bridle ?

Last night he left us after tea—
I never thought he'd leave us—never ;
He was so pleasant, was'nt he ?
Papa, too, said he was so clever.
And, Fanny, you'll be glad to hear—
That little boy that looked so yellow,
Whose eyes were *so* like his—my dear,
Is a poor little orphan fellow !

That odious Miss Lucretia Browne,
Who, with her horrid pugs and Bibles,
Is always running through the town,
And circulating tracts—and libels ;
Because he never danced with her,
Told dear Mamma such horrid scandal
About his moral character,
For stooping, just to tie a sandal !

She said he went to fights and fairs—
That always gives Papa the fidgets ;
She said he did not know his prayers—
He's every Sunday at St. Bridget's !

She said he squeezed one's waist and hands
  Whene'er he waltzed—a plague upon her—
I danced with him at Lady Bland's—
  He never squeezed me—'pon my honour!

His regiment have got the route,
  (They came down here to quell the riot,
And now—what can they be about,
  The stupid people are so quiet:)—
They say it is to India, too,
  If there I'm sure he'll get the liver!—
And should he bathe—he used to do—
  They've crocodiles in every river.

There may be bright eyes there—and then!
  (I'm sure I love him like a brother;)
His lute will soon be strung again,
  His heart will soon beat for another.
I know him well! he is not false—
  But when the song he loves is playing—
Or after he has danced a waltz—
  He never knows what he is saying.

I know 'twas wrong—'twas very wrong—
  To listen to his wild romancing;
Last night I danced with him too long,—
  One's always giddy after dancing:
But when he begged me so to sing,
  And when he sighed, and asked me, "Would I?"
And when he took my turquoise ring,
  I'm sure I could not help it, could I?

Papa was lecturing the girls,
  And talked of settlements and rentals;—
I wore a white-lace frock—and pearls—
  He looked so well in regimentals!

And just before we came away,
  While we were waiting for the carriage,
I heard him, not quite plainly, say
  Something of Blacksmiths—and of marriage.

He promised, if he could get leave,
  He'd soon come back—I wonder can he?—
Lord Hill is very strict, I b'lieve;—
  (What could he mean by Blacksmiths, Fanny?)
He said he wished we ne'er had met,
  I answered—it was lovely weather!—
And then he bade me not forget
  The pleasant days we'd passed together.

He's gone—and other lips may weave
  A stronger spell than mine to bind him;
But bid him, if he loves me, leave
  Those rhymes he made me love, behind him;
Tell him I know those waywards strings
  Not always sound to mirthful measures;
But sighs are sometimes pleasant things,
  And tears from those we love are treasures.

Tell him to leave off drinking wine,—
  Tell him to break himself off smoking,—
Tell him to go to bed at nine,—
  His hours are really quite provoking.
Tell him I hope he won't get fat,—
  Tell him to act with due reflection;—
Tell him to wear a broad-leaf hat,
  Or else he'll ruin his complexion.

Tell him I am *so* ill to-day,—
  Perhaps to-morrow I'll be better;—
Tell him before he goes away
  To write me a consoling letter:

Tell him to send me down that song
  He said he loved the best of any,—
Tell him I'm sure I can't live long,—
  And—bid him love me,—won't you, Fanny?

AN INVITATION.

> "If she be not fair to me,
> What care I how fair she be."—SUCKLING.

WHEREFORE, Fanny, look so lovely,
  In your anger, in your glee?
Laughing, weeping, fair, capricious!
If you will look so delicious,
    Prythee, look at me!

Wherefore, Fanny, sing so sweetly,
  Like the bird upon the tree,—
Hearts in dozens round you bringing?
Siren! if you must be singing,
    Prythee, sing to me!

Wherefore, Fanny, dance so lightly,
  Like the wave upon the sea?
Motion every charm enhancing;
Fanny, if you will be dancing,
    Prythee, dance with me!

Wherefore smile so like an angel,
  Angel-like although you be?
Head and heart at once beguiling,—
Dearest! if you will be smiling,
    Prythee, smile on me!

Wherefore flirt, and aim your arrows
  At each harmless fop you see?
Coxcombs, hardly worth the hurting;
Tyrant! if you must be flirting,
    Prythee, flirt with me!

Wherefore, Fanny, kiss and fondle
  Half the ugly brats you see?
Waste not love among so many;—
Sweetest! if you fondle any,
    Prythee, fondle me!

Wherefore wedlock's lottery enter?
  Chances for you, one to three!
Richest ventures oft miscarry,
Fanny, Fanny, if you marry,
    Prythee, marry me!

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY A COLLEGE TUTOR,

AT A SUPPER PARTY, JULY 1ST, 1825.

Ye dons and ye doctors, ye provosts and proctors,
  Who are paid to monopolise knowledge,
Come make opposition, by vote and petition,
  To the radical infidel college;
Come put forth your powers, in aid of the towers
  Which boast of their bishops and martyrs;
And arm all the terrors of privileged errors
  Which live by the wax of their charters.

Let Mackintosh battle with Canning and V——,
  Let Brougham be a friend to the niggers,
Burdett cure the nation's misrepresentations,
  And Hume make a figure in figures ;
But let them not babble of Greek to the rabble,
  Nor teach the mechanics their letters ;
The labouring classes were born to be asses,
  And not to be aping their betters.

'Tis a terrible crisis for Cam and for Isis,
  Fat butchers are learning dissection ;
And looking-glass makers become Sabbath breakers,
  To study the laws of reflection ;
Sin ϕ and sin θ, no sin can be sweeter,
  Are taught to the poor of both sexes,
And weavers and spinners jump up from their dinners
  To flirt with their y's and their x's.

Chuck farthing advances the doctrine of chances
  In spite of the staff of the beadle ;
And menders of breeches between the long stitches
  Write books on the laws of the needle ;
And chandlers all chatter of luminous matter,
  Who communicate none to their tallows ;
And rogues gets a notion of the pendulum's motion
  Which is only of use at the gallows.

The impurest of Attics read pure mathematics,
  The gin-shops are turned into cloisters ;
A Crawford next summer will fill up your rummer,
  A Copleston open your oysters ;
The bells of Old Bailey are practising gaily
  The erudite tunes of St. Mary's ;
The Minories any day will rear you a Kennedy,
  And Bishopsgate blossom with Airy's.

The nature of granites, the tricks of the planets,
  The forces of steam and of gases,
The engines mechanical, the long words botanical,
  The ranging of beetles in classes,
The delicate junctions of symbols and functions,
  The impossible roots of equations,
Are these proper questions for Cockney digestions,
  Fit food for a cit's lucubrations?

The eloquent pages of time-hallowed sages,
  Embalmed by some critical German,
Old presents by Brunckius, new futures by Monckius,*
  The squabbles of Porson with Hermann,
Your Alphas and Betas, your canons of metres,
  Your infinite powers of particles,
Shall these and such like work make journeymen strike work,
  And 'prentices tear up their articles.

But oh, since fair science will cruelly fly hence,
  To smile upon vagrants and gypsies,
Since knights of the hammer must handle their grammar,
  And nightmen account for eclipses,
Our handicraft neighbours shall share in our labours
  If they leave us the whole of the honey,
And the sans culotte caitiff shall start for the plate if
  He puts in no claim for plate-money.

Ye halls on whose daïs the don of to-day is
  To feed on the beef and the benison,
Ye common room glories, where beneficed Tories
  Digest their belief and their venison,

* Referring to a note by Bishop Monk on the Greek Play, "Facile *persentibunt* juvenes."

Ye duels scholastic, where quibbles monastic
  Are asserted with none to confute them,
Ye grave congregations, where frequent taxations
  Are settled with none to dispute them :

Far hence be the season when radical treason
  Of port and of puddings shall bilk ye ;
When the weavers aforesaid shall taste of our boar's head,
  The silk-winders swallow our silky :
When the mob shall eat faster than any vice-master,
  The watermen try to out-tope us ;
When Campbell shall dish up a bowl of our bishop.
  Or Brougham and Co. cope with our Copus.*

GOOD NIGHT.

GOOD night to thee, lady !—though many
  Have join'd in the dance to-night,
Thy form was the fairest of any,
  Where all was seducing and bright ;
Thy smile was the softest and dearest,
  Thy form the most sylph-like of all,
And thy voice the most gladsome and clearest
  That e'er held a partner in thrall.

Good night to thee, lady !—'tis over—
  The waltz, the quadrille, and the song—
The whisper'd farewell of the lover,
  The heartless adieu of the throng ;

* This poem was published in the *Morning Chronicle* of 19th July 1825, in reference to a meeting in promotion of the scheme for the London University that had been held at the London Tavern on the first of that month.

The heart that was throbbing with pleasure,
  The eyelid that long'd for repose—
The beaux that were dreaming of treasure,
  The girls that were dreaming of beaux.

'Tis over—the lights are all dying,
  The coaches all driving away;
And many a fair one is sighing,
  And many a false one is gay;
And Beauty counts over her numbers
  Of conquests, as homeward she drives—
And some are gone home to their slumbers,
  And some are gone home to their wives.

And I, while my cab in the shower
  Is waiting, the last at the door
Am looking all around for the flower
  That fell from your wreath on the floor,
I'll keep it—if but to remind me,
  Though withered and faded its hue—
Wherever next season may find me—
  Of England—of Almack's—and you!

There are tones that will haunt us, though lonely
  Our path be o'er mountain or sea;
There are looks that will part from us only
  When memory ceases to be;
There are hopes which our burden can lighten,
  Though toilsome and steep be the way;
And dreams that, like moonlight, can brighten
  With a light that is clearer than day.

There are names that we cherish, though nameless;
  For aye on the lips they may be;
There are hearts that, though fetter'd, are tameless,
  And thoughts unexpress'd, but still free!

And some are too grave for a rover,
  And some for a husband too light.
—The ball and my dream are all over—
  Good night to thee, lady ! good night !

HOBBLEDEHOYS.

"Not a man—nor a boy—
But a Hobbledehoy."—*Old Song.*

Oh ! there is a time, a happy time,
  When a boy is just half a man ;
When ladies may kiss him without a crime,
  And flirt with him like a fan :—
When mammas with their daughters will leave him alone,
  If he only will seem to fear them ;
While were he a man, or a little more grown,
  They never would let him near them.

These, Lilly !—these were the days when you
  Were my boyhood's earliest flame,—
When I thought it an honour to tie your shoe,
  And trembled to hear your name :—
When I scarcely ventured to take a kiss,
  Though your lips seemed half to invite me ;
But, Lilly ! I soon got over this,—
  When I kissed—and they did not bite me !

Oh ! these were gladsome and fairy times,
  And our hearts were then in their Spring,
When I passed my nights in writing you rhymes,
  And my days in hearing you sing :—

And don't you remember your mother's dismay
  When she found in your drawer my sonnet;
And the beautiful verses I wrote, one day,
  On the ribbon that hung from your bonnet!

And the seat we made by the fountain's gush,
  Where your task you were wont to say,—
And how I lay under the holly-bush
  Till your governess went away:—
And how, when too long at your task you sat,
  Or whenever a kiss I wanted,
I brayed like an ass—or mewed like a cat,
  Till she deemed that the place was haunted!

And do you not, love, remember the days
  When I dressed you for the play,—
When I pinned your kerchief, and laced your stays
  In the neatest and tidiest way!—
And do you forget the kiss you gave
  When I tore my hand with the pin;—
And how you wondered men would not shave
  The beards from their horrible chin.

And do you remember the garden wall
  I climbed up every night,—
And the racket we made in the servants' hall
  When the wind had put out the light;—
When Sally got up in her petticoat,
  And John came out in his shirt,—
And I silenced her with a guinea-note,
  And blinded him with a squirt!

And don't you remember the horrible bite
  I got from the gardener's bitch,
When John let her out of the kennel, for spite,
  And she seized me, crossing the ditch;—

And how you wept when you saw my blood,
  And numbered me with Love's martyrs,—
And how you helped me out of the mud,
  By tying together your garters !

But, Lilly ! now I am grown a man,
  And those days have all gone by,—
And Fortune may give me the best she can,
  And the brightest destiny ;
But I would give every hope and joy
  That my spirit may taste again,
That I once more were that gladsome boy,
  And that you were as young as then.

A CLASSICAL WALK.

"You have often promised to teach me Greek and Latin. Now, that we are in this classic land, do keep your promise."—*Conversation on the beach at Salerno.*

Oh, yes ! beside that moonlit creek,
  Where sleep the silent waters,
I'll teach thee all I know of Greek,
  Young queen of beauty's daughters !
And each sweet eve, by that lone shore,
  Where no rude step can fright us,
We'll cull sweet flowers of classic lore,
  With the young stars to light us !

I'll teach thee how the billows grieve,
  Where Lesbian Sappho slumbers,
How young Catullus used to weave
  Fresh heart-sighs with his numbers :

How Ariadne sighed and wept,
  And watched her love's returning;
And the young maid of Sestos kept
  Her love-lamp ever burning.

There by the light the quiet sky
  And the soft stars have made us,
Thou for my Commentary;—I
  Thy Lexicon and Gradus;—
We'll con each page of that bright lore,
  Love taught those maiden sages
Who read in Paphos' bowers of yore,
  With moonlight on the pages!

And if, ere half our walk be done,
  Some ruined fane we light on,
Which love once warmed,—some little one
  That moonlight then is bright on;
We'll kneel—and should some spark that glows
  Still round the altar, reach us,
And light our hearts—Heaven only knows
  What wondrous things 'twill teach us!

STANZAS.

"Why will you never listen to an Irish melody?"—*Query in a Ball-room.*

THE songs she sung—the songs she sung!
  How many a sigh they stole!
Oh! there be lutes as sweetly strung,
  But none with half the soul

That dwelt in every silver tone
  She drew from each sweet string :
Oh ! no,—the songs she made her own
  I will not hear them sing !

The songs she sung—the songs she sung !
  How few and faint the words
Of praise that fell whene'er she flung
  Her fingers o'er the chords ;
No plaudit followed when the strain
  Died on the quivering air,
But tears were gushing forth like rain,
  And lips were quivering there !

The songs she sung—the songs she sung !
  Long, grieving years are fled,
Earth's yearnings from the heart are flung,
  Earth's hopes are with the dead ;
And worldly wrongs—forgot—forgiven—
  Sleep in Death's second birth ;
But I would only hear in Heaven
  The songs *she* gave to earth !

BECAUSE !

" Why? Because."—LINDLEY MURRAY.

SWEET Nea !—for your lovely sake
  I weave these rambling numbers,
Because I've lain an hour awake,
  And can't compose my slumbers ;
Because your beauty's gentle light
  Is round my pillow beaming,

And flings, I know not why, to-night,
  Some witchery o'er my dreaming !

Because we've passed some joyous days,
  And danced some merry dances ;
Because you love old Beaumont's plays,
  And old Froissart's romances !
Because, whene'er I hear your words,
  Some pleasant feeling lingers ;
Because I think your heart has chords
  That vibrate to my fingers !

Because you've got those long, soft curls
  I've sworn should deck my goddess ;
Because you're not, like other girls,
  All bustle, blush, and bodice !
Because your eyes are deep and blue,
  Your fingers long and rosy ;
Because a little child and you
  Would make one's home so cosy !

Because your little tiny nose
  Turns up so pert and funny ;
Because I know you choose your beaux
  More for their mirth than money ;
Because I think you'd rather twirl
  A waltz, with me to guide you,
Than talk small nonsense with an Earl,
  And a coronet beside you !

Because you don't object to walk,
  And are not given to fainting ;
Because you have not learned to talk
  Of flowers and Poonah-painting ;

Because I think you'd scarce refuse
  To sew one on a button;
Because I know you'd sometimes choose
  To dine on simple mutton!

Because I think I'm just so weak
  As, some of those fine morrows,
To ask you if you'll let me speak
  My story—and *my* sorrows:
Because the rest's a simple thing,
  A matter quickly over,
A church—a priest—a sigh—a ring—
  And a chaise-and-four for Dover!

SONG TO A SERENADER IN FEBRUARY.

AIR—"Why hast thou taught me to love thee?"

DEAR minstrel, the dangers are not to be told
  Of those strains which have trebly undone me,—
A victim to pity, to love, and to cold,
  I'll be dead by the time thou hast won me!

Oh! think for a moment—whoever thou art,
  On the woes that beset me together,—
If thou wilt not consider the state of my heart,
  Oh! think of the state of the weather.

How keenly around me the night breezes blow,—
  How sweetly thy parting note lingers,—
Ah! would that the glow of my heart could bestow
  A share of its warmth to—my fingers!

But though she who would watch while the nightingales sing
Should scorn to let cold overcome her,—
Though, like other sweet birds, you begin in the Spring,
I can't fall in love till the Summer.

THE CHILDE'S DESTINY.

"And none did love him—not his lemans dear."
—BYRON.

No mistress of the hidden skill,
No wizard gaunt and grim,
Went up by night to heath or hill
To read the stars for him;
The merriest girl in all the land
Of vine-encircled France
Bestowed upon his brow and hand
Her philosophic glance:
"I bind thee with a spell," said she,
"I sign thee with a sign;
No woman's love shall light on thee,
No woman's heart be thine!

"And trust me, 'tis not that thy cheek
Is colourless and cold;
Nor that thine eye is slow to speak
What only eyes have told;
And many a cheek of paler white
Hath blushed with passion's kiss,
And many an eye of lesser light
Hath caught its fire from bliss;

Yet while the rivers seek the sea,
  And while the young stars shine,
No woman's love shall light on thee,—
  No woman's heart be thine !

" And 'tis not that thy spirit, awed
  By Beauty's numbing spell,
Shrinks from the force or from the fraud
  Which Beauty loves so well ;
For thou hast learned to watch, and wake,
  And swear by earth and sky ;
And thou art very bold to take
  What we must still deny :
I cannot tell ;—the charm was wrought
  By other threads than mine !
The lips are lightly begged or bought,—
  The heart may not be thine !

" Yet thine the brightest smiles shall be
  That ever Beauty wore ;
And confidence from two or three,
  And compliments from more ;
And one shall give—perchance hath given—
  What only is not love,—
Friendship,—oh ! such as saints in heaven
  Rain on us from above :
If she shall meet thee in the bower,
  Or name thee in the shrine,
O wear the ring and guard the flower !
  Her heart may not be thine !

" Go, set thy boat before the blast,
  Thy breast before the gun ;
The haven shall be reached at last,
  The battle shall be won :

Or muse upon thy country's laws,
  Or strike thy country's lute;
And patriot hands shall sound applause,
  And lovely lips be mute.
Go, dig the diamond from the wave,
  The treasure from the mine;
Enjoy the wreath, the gold, the grave,—
  No woman's heart is thine!

"I charm thee from the agony
  Which others feel or feign;
From anger, and from jealousy,
  From doubt, and from disdain;
I bid thee wear the scorn of years
  Upon the cheek of youth,
And curl the lip at passion's tears,
  And shake the head at truth;
While there is bliss in revelry,
  Forgetfulness in wine,
Be thou from woman's love as free
  As woman is from thine!"

THE MODERN NECTAR.

One day, as Bacchus wandered out
    From his own gay and glorious heaven,
To see what mortals were about
    Below, 'twixt six o'clock and seven,
And laugh at all the toils and tears,
The sudden hopes, the causeless fears,
The midnight songs, the morning smarts,
The aching heads, the breaking hearts,

Which he and his fair crony Venus
Within the month had sown between us,
He lighted by chance on a fiddling fellow
Who never was known to be less than mellow,
A wandering poet, who thought it his duty
To feed upon nothing but bowls and beauty,
Who worshipped a rhyme, and detested a quarrel,
And cared not a single straw for laurel,
Holding that grief was sobriety's daughter,
And loathing critics, and cold water.

Ere day on the Gog-Magog hills had fainted,
The god and the minstrel were quite acquainted;
Beneath a tree, in the sunny weather,
They sate them down, and drank together:
They drank of all fluids that ever were poured
By an English lout, or a German lord,
Rum and shrub, and brandy and gin,
One after another, they stowed them in,
Claret of Carbonell, porter of Meux,
Champagne which would waken a wit in dukes,
Humble Port, and proud Tokay,
Persico, and Crême de Thé,
The blundering Irishman's Usquebaugh,
The fiery Welshman's Cwrw da;
And after toasting various names
Of mortal and immortal flames,
And whispering more than I or you know
Of Mistress Poll, and Mistress Juno,
The god departed, scarcely knowing
A Zephyr's from a nose's blowing,
A frigate from a pewter flagon,
Or Thespis from his own stage waggon;
And rolling about like a barrel of grog,
He went up to heaven as drunk as a hog!

"Now may I," he lisped, "for ever sit
In Lethe's darkest and deepest pit,
Where dulness everlasting reigns
O'er the quiet pulse and the drowsy brains,
Where ladies jest, and lovers laugh,
And noble lords are bound in calf,
And Zoilus for his sins rehearses
Old Bentham's prose, old Wordsworth s verses,
If I have not found a richer draught
Than ever yet Olympus quaffed
Better and brighter and dearer far
Than the golden sands of Pactolus are!"

And then he filled in triumph up,
To the highest top sparkle, Jove's beaming cup,
And pulling up his silver hose,
And turning in his tottering toes
(While Hebe, as usual, the mischievous gipsy,
Was laughing to see her brother tipsy),
He said—"May it please your high Divinity,
This nectar is—Milk Punch at Trinity!"

AN EPITAPH

On the late King of the Sandwich Islands.

1825.

BENEATH the marble, mud, or moss,
  Which e'er his subjects shall determine,
Entombed in eulogies and dross,
  The Island King is food for vermin.

Preserved by scribblers and by salt
  From Lethe and sepulchral vapours,
His body fills his father's vault,
  His character, the daily papers.

Well was he framed for royal seat ;
  Kind, to the meanest of his creatures,
With tender heart and tender feet,
  And open purse and open features;
The ladies say who laid him out,
  And earned thereby the usual pensions,
They never wreathed a shroud about
  A corpse of more genteel dimensions.

He warred with half-a-score of foes,
  And shone, by proxy, in the quarrel ;
Enjoyed hard fights and soft repose,
  And deathless debt and deathless laurel
His enemies were scalped and flayed
  Whene'er his soldiers were victorious,
And widows wept and paupers paid
  To make their sovereign ruler glorious ;

And days were set apart for thanks,
  And prayers were said by pious readers,
And laud was lavished on the ranks,
  And laurel lavished on their leaders ;
Events are writ by History's pen,
  Though causes are too much to care for ;
Fame talks about the where and when,
  While Folly asks the why and wherefore.

In peace he was intensely gay
  And indefatigably busy,

Preparing gewgaws every day,
  And shows to make his subjects dizzy,
And hearing the report of guns,
  And signing the report of gaolers,
And making up receipts for buns,
  And patterns for the army tailors,

And building carriages and boats,
  And streets, and chapels, and pavilions,
And regulating all the coats,
  And all the principles of millions,
And drinking homilies and gin,
  And chewing pork and adulation,
And looking backwards upon sin,
  And looking forward to salvation.

The people, in his happy reign,
  Were blest beyond all other nations;
Unharmed by foreign axe or chain,
  Unhealed by civil innovations;
They served the usual logs and stones
  With all the usual rites and terrors,
And swallowed all their father's bones,
  And swallowed all their father's errors.

When the fierce mob, with clubs and knives,
  All vowed that nothing should content them,
But that their representatives
  Should actually represent them,
He interposed the proper checks,
  By sending troops with drums and banners
To cut their speeches short, and necks,
  And break their heads to mend their manners,

And when Dissension flung her stain
  Upon the light of Hymen's altar,
And Destiny made Hymen's chain
  As galling as the hangman's halter,
He passed a most domestic life,
  By many mistresses befriended,
And did not put away his wife,
  For fear the priest should be offended.

And thus at last he sank to rest
  Amid the blessings of his people,
And sighs were heard from every breast,
  And bells were tolled from every steeple,
And loud was every public throng
  His brilliant character adorning,
And poets raised a mourning song,
  And clothiers raised the price of mourning.

His funeral was very grand,
  Followed by many robes and maces,
And all the great ones of the land
  Struggling, as heretofore, for places;
And every loyal minister
  Was there, with signs of purse-felt sorrow,
Save Pozzy, his lord chancellor,
  Who promised to attend to-morrow.

Peace to his dust. His fostering care
  By grateful hearts shall long be cherished;
And all his subjects shall declare
  They lost a grinder when he perished.
They who shall look upon the lead
  In which a people's love hath shrined him,
Will say when all the worst is said,
  Perhaps he leaves a worse behind him.

THE CHAUNT OF THE BRAZEN HEAD.

"Brazen companion of my solitary hours! do you, while I recline, pronounce a prologue to those sentiments of Wisdom and Virtue, which are hereafter to be the oracles of statesmen, and the guides of philosophers. Give me to-night a proem of our essay, an opening of our case, a division of our subject. Speak!" (*Slow music. The Friar falls asleep. The head chaunts as follows.*) —THE BRAZEN HEAD.

I THINK, whatever mortals crave,
  With impotent endeavour,—
A wreath, a rank, a throne, a grave,—
  The world goes round for ever:
I think that life is not too long;
  And therefore I determine,
That many people read a song
  Who will not read a sermon.

I think you've looked through many hearts,
  And mused on many actions,
And studied Man's component parts,
  And Nature's compound fractions;
I think you've picked up truth by bits
  From foreigner and neighbour;
I think the world has lost its wits,
  And you have lost your labour.

I think the studies of the wise,
  The hero's noisy quarrel,
The majesty of woman's eyes,
  The poet's cherished laurel,
And all that makes us lean or fat,
  And all that charms or troubles,—
This bubble is more bright than that,
  But still they all are bubbles.

I think the thing you call Renown,
  The unsubstantial vapour
For which the soldier burns a town,
  The sonnetteer a taper,
Is like the mist which, as he flies,
  The horseman leaves behind him;
He cannot mark its wreaths arise,
  Or if he does they blind him.

I think one nod of Mistress Chance
  Makes creditors of debtors,
And shifts the funeral for the dance,
  The sceptre for the fetters:
I think that Fortune's favoured guest
  May live to gnaw the platters,
And he that wears the purple vest
  May wear the rags and tatters.

I think the Tories love to buy
  "Your Lordships" and "your Graces,"
By loathing common honesty,
  And lauding commonplaces:
I think that some are very wise,
  And some are very funny,
And some grow rich by telling lies,
  And some by telling money.

I think the Whigs are wicked knaves—
  (And very like the Tories)—
Who doubt that Britain rules the waves,
  And ask the price of glories:
I think that many fret and fume
  At what their friends are planning,
And Mr. Hume hates Mr. Brougham,
  As much as Mr. Canning.

I think that friars and their hoods,
  Their doctrines and their maggots,
Have lighted up too many feuds,
  And far too many faggots :
I think, while zealots fast and frown,
  And fight for two or seven,
That there are fifty roads to Town,
  And rather more to Heaven.

I think that, thanks to Paget's lance,
  And thanks to Chester's learning,
The hearts that burned for fame in France
  At home are safe from burning :
I think the Pope is on his back ;
  And, though 'tis fun to shake him,
I think the Devil not so black
  As many people make him.

I think that Love is like a play,
  Where tears and smiles are blended,
Or like a faithless April day,
  Whose shine with shower is ended :
Like Colnbrook pavement, rather rough,
  Like trade, exposed to losses,
And like a Highland plaid,—all stuff,
  And very full of crosses.

I think the world, though dark it be,
  Has aye one rapturous pleasure
Concealed in life's monotony,
  For those who seek the treasure :
One planet in a starless night,
  One blossom on a briar,
One friend not quite a hypocrite,
  One woman not a liar !

I think poor beggars court St. Giles,
  Rich beggars court St. Stephen ;
And death looks down with nods and smiles,
  And makes the odds all even :
I think some die upon the field,
  And some upon the billow,
And some are laid beneath a shield,
  And some beneath a willow.

I think that very few have sighed
  When Fate at last has found them,
Though bitter foes were by their side,
  And barren moss around them :
I think that some have died of drought,
  And some have died of drinking ;
I think that nought is worth a thought,—
  And I'm a fool for thinking !

MY OWN FUNERAL.

(*From Beranger.*)

THIS morning, as in bed I lay,
  Half waking and half sleeping,
A score of Loves, immensely gay,
  Were round my chamber creeping ;
I could not move my hand or head
  To ask them what the stir meant ;
And "Ah !" they cried, "our friend is dead ;
  Prepare for his interment !"
    All whose hearts with mine were blended,
    Weep for me ! my days are ended !

One drinks my brightest Burgundy,
  Without a blush, before me;
One brings a little rosary,
  And breathes a blessing o'er me;
One finds my pretty chambermaid,
  And courts her in dumb crambo;
Another sees the mutes arrayed
  With fife by way of flambeau:
    In your feasting and your fêting,
    Weep for me! my hearse is waiting.

Was ever such a strange array?
  The mourners all are singing;
From all the churches on our way
  A merry peal is ringing;
The pall that clothes my cold remains,
  Instead of boars and dragons,
Is blazoned o'er with darts and chains,
  With lutes, and flowers, and flagons:
    Passers-by their heads are shaking!—
    Weep for me! my grave is making.

And now they let my coffin fall;
  And one of them rehearses,
For want of holy ritual,
  My own least holy verses:
The sculptor carves a laurel leaf,
  And writes my name and story;
And silent nature in her grief
  Seems dreaming of my glory:
    Just as I am made immortal,—
    Weep for me!—they bar the portal.

But Isabel, by accident,
  Was wandering by that minute;
She opened that dark monument,
  And found her slave within it;

The clergy said the Mass in vain,
  The College could not save me;
But life, she swears, returned again
  With the first kiss she gave me:
    You who deem that life is sorrow,
    Weep for me again to-morrow!

L'INCONNUE.

MANY a beaming brow I've known,
    And many a dazzling eye,
And I've listened to many a melting tone
    In magic fleeting by;
And mine was never a heart of stone,
And yet my heart hath given to none
    The tribute of a sigh;
For Fancy's wild and witching mirth
Was dearer than aught I found on earth,
And the fairest forms I ever knew
Were far less fair than—L'Inconnue!

Many an eye that once was bright
    Is dark to-day in gloom;
Many a voice that once was light
    Is silent in the tomb;
Many a flower that once was dight
In beauty's most entrancing might
    Hath faded in its bloom;
But she is still as fair and gay
As if she had sprung to life to-day;
A ceaseless tone and a deathless hue
Wild Fancy hath given to—L'Inconnue

Many an eye of piercing jet
    Hath only gleamed to grieve me;
Many a fairy form I've met,
    But none have wept to leave me;
When all forsake, and all forget,
One pleasant dream shall haunt me yet,
    One hope shall not deceive me;
For oh! when all beside is past,
Fancy is found our friend at last;
And the faith is firm and the love is true
Which are vowed by the lips of—L'Inconnue!

SONG.

(*From Lidean's Love.*)

"O LOVE! O beauteous Love!
  Thy home is made for all sweet things,
A dwelling for thine own soft dove
  And souls as spotless as her wings;
    There summer ceases never:
The trees are rich with luscious fruits,
  The bowers are full of joyous throngs,
And gales that come from Heaven's own lutes
  And rivulets whose streams are songs
    Go murmuring on for ever!

O Love! O wretched Love!
  Thy home is made for bitter care;
And sounds are in thy myrtle grove
  Of late repentance, long despair,
    Of feigning and forsaking:

Thy banquet is the doubt and fear
  That come we know not whence or why,
The smile that hardly masks a tear,
  The laughter that is half a sigh,
    The heart that jests in breaking !

O Love ! O faithless Love !
  Thy home is like the roving star
Which seems so fair, so far above
  The world where woes and sorrows are ;
    But could we wander thither,
There's nothing but another earth
  As dark and restless as our own,
Where misery is child of mirth,
  And every heart is born to groan,
    And every flower to wither ! "

JOSEPHINE.

We did not meet in courtly hall,
  Where birth and beauty throng,
Where Luxury holds festival,
  And Wit awakes the song ;
We met where darker spirits meet,
  In the home of sin and shame,
Where Satan shows his cloven feet
  And hides his titled name :
And she knew that she could not be, Love,
  What once she might have been ;
But she was kind to me, Love,
  My pretty Josephine.

We did not part beneath the sky,
  As warmer lovers part;
Where night conceals the glistening eye,
  But not the throbbing heart;
We parted on the spot of ground
  Where we first had laughed at love,
And ever the jests were loud around,
  And the lamps were bright above:—
"The heaven is very dark, Love,
  The blast is very keen,
But merrily rides my bark, Love,
  Good night, my Josephine!"

She did not speak of ring or vow,
  But filled the cup of wine,
And took the roses from her brow
  To make a wreath for mine;
And bade me, when the gale should lift
  My light skiff o'er the wave,
To think as little of the gift
  As of the hand that gave:—
"Go gaily o'er the sea, Love,
  And find your own heart's queen;
And look not back to me, Love,
  Your humble Josephine!"

That garland breathes and blooms no more;
  Past are those idle hours:
I would not, could I choose, restore
  The fondness, or the flowers.
Yet oft their withered witchery
  Revives its wonted thrill,
Remembered, not with passion's sigh,
  But, oh! remembered still;

And even from your side, Love,
  And even from this scene,
One look is o'er the tide, Love,
  One thought with Josephine.

Alas! your lips are rosier,
  Your eyes of softer blue,
And I have never felt for her
  As I have felt for you;
Our love was like the bright snow-flakes
  Which melt before you pass,
Or the bubble on the wine, which breaks
  Before you lip the glass;
You saw these eyelids wet, Love,
  Which she has never seen;
But bid me not forget, Love,
  My poor Josephine!

SONG FOR THE FOURTEENTH OF FEBRUARY.

By a General Lover.

"Mille gravem telis, exhaustâ pene pharetrâ."

APOLLO has peeped through the shutter,
  And awakened the witty and fair;
The boarding-school belle's in a flutter,
  The twopenny post's in despair;
The breath of the morning is flinging
  A magic on blossom, on spray,
And cockneys and sparrows are singing
  In chorus on Valentine's Day.

Away with ye, dreams of disaster,
  Away with ye, visions of law,
Of cases I never shall master,
  Of pleadings I never shall draw !
Away with ye, parchments and papers,
  Red tapes, unread volumes, away !
It gives a fond lover the vapours
  To see you on Valentine's Day.

I'll sit in my nightcap, like Hayley,
  I'll sit with my arms crost, like Spain.
Till joys, which are vanishing daily,
  Come back in their lustre again ;
Oh ! shall I look over the waters,
  Or shall I look over the way,
For the brightest and best of earth's daughters,
  To rhyme to, on Valentine's Day?

Shall I crown with my worship, for fame's sake,
  Some goddess whom Fashion has starred,
Make puns on Miss Love and her namesake,
  Or pray for a *pas* with Brocard ?
Shall I flirt, in romantic idea,
  With Chester's adorable clay,
Or whisper in transport "*Si mea**
  Cum vestris"—on Valentine's Day?

Shall I kneel to a Sylvia or Celia,
  Who no one e'er saw, or may see,
A fancy-drawn Laura-Amelia,
  An *ad libit.* Anna Marie?
Shall I court an initial with stars to it,
  Go mad for a G. or a J.,

* Si mea cum vestris valuissent vota !—OVID, *Met.*

Get Bishop to put a few bars to it,
  And print it on Valentine's Day?

I think not of Laura the witty;
  For, oh! she is married at York!
I sigh not for Rose of the City,
  For, oh! she is buried at Cork!
Adèle has a braver and better
  To say—what I never could say;
Louise cannot construe a letter
  Of English, on Valentine's Day.

So perish the leaves in the arbour!
  The tree is all bare in the blast;
Like a wreck that is drifting to harbour,
  I come to thee, Lady, at last:
Where art thou, so lovely and lonely?
  Though idle the lute and the lay,
The lute and the lay are thine only,
  My fairest, on Valentine's Day.

For thee I have opened my Blackstone,
  For thee I have shut up myself;
Exchanged my long curls for a Caxton,
  And laid my short whist on the shelf;
For thee I have sold my old sherry,
  For thee I have burnt my new play;
And I grow philosophical,—very!
  Except upon Valentine's Day!

PALINODIA.

"Nec meus hic sermo est, sed quem præcepit."
—HORACE.

THERE was a time, when I could feel
All passion's hopes and fears;
And tell what tongues can ne'er reveal
By smiles and sighs and tears.
The days are gone! no more—no more
The cruel Fates allow;
And though I'm hardly twenty-four,—
I'm not a lover now.
Lady, the mist is on my sight,
The chill is on my brow;
My day is night, my bloom is blight;
I'm not a lover now!

I never talk about the clouds,
I laugh at girls and boys,
I'm growing rather fond of crowds,
And very fond of noise;
I never wander forth alone
Upon the mountain's brow;
I weighed, last winter, sixteen stone;—
I'm not a lover now!

I never wish to raise a veil,
I never raise a sigh;
I never tell a tender tale,
I never tell a lie:
I cannot kneel, as once I did;
I've quite forgot my bow;
I never do as I am bid;—
I'm not a lover now!

I make strange blunders every day,
  If I would be gallant;
Take smiles for wrinkles, black for grey,
  And nieces for their aunt:
I fly from folly, though it flows
  From lips of loveliest glow;
I don't object to length of nose;—
  I'm not a lover now!

I find my Ovid very dry,
  My Petrarch quite a pill,
Cut Fancy for Philosophy,
  Tom Moore for Mr. Mill.
And belles may read, and beaux may write,—
  I care not who or how;
I burnt my Album, Sunday night;—
  I'm not a lover now!

I don't encourage idle dreams
  Of poison or of ropes:
I cannot dine on airy schemes;
  I cannot sup on hopes:
New milk, I own, is very fine,
  Just foaming from the cow;
But yet I want my pint of wine;—
  I'm not a lover now!

When Laura sings young hearts away,
  I'm deafer than the deep;
When Leonora goes to play,
  I sometimes go to sleep;
When Mary draws her white gloves out,
  I never dance, I vow,—
"Too hot to kick one's heel's about!"
  I'm not a lover now!

I'm busy, now, with state affairs;
  I prate of Pitt and Fox;
I ask the price of rail-road shares,
  I watch the turns of stocks.
And this is life! no verdure blooms
  Upon the withered bough:
I save a fortune in perfumes;—
  I'm not a lover now!

I may be yet, what others are,
  A boudoir's babbling fool,
The flattered star of Bench or Bar,
  A party's chief, or tool:—
Come shower or sunshine, hope or fear,
  The palace or the plough,—
My heart and lute are broken here;—
  I'm not a lover now!
    Lady, the mist is on my sight,
      The chill is on my brow;
    My day is night, my bloom is blight;
      I'm not a lover now!

TIME'S SONG.

O'ER the level plains, where mountains greet me as I go,
O'er the desert waste, where fountains at my bidding flow,
On the boundless beam by day, on the cloud by night,
I am riding hence away: who will chain my flight?

War his weary watch was keeping,—I have crushed his spear;
Grief within her bower was weeping,—I have dried her tear;

Pleasure caught a minute's hold,—then I hurried by,
Leaving all her banquet cold, and her goblet dry.

Power had won a throne of glory: where is now his fame?
Genius said, "I live in story:" who hath heard his name?
Love beneath a myrtle bough whispered "Why so fast?"
And the roses on his brow withered as I past.

I have heard the heifer lowing o'er the wild wave's bed;
I have seen the billow flowing where the cattle fed;
Where began my wandering? Memory will not say!
Where will rest my weary wings? Science turns away!

THE HOOPOE'S INVOCATION TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

(From the Birds of Aristophanes, l. 209.)

WAKEN, dear one, from thy slumbers;
Pour again those holy numbers,
Which thou warblest there alone
In a heaven-instructed tone,
Mourning from this leafy shrine
Lost—lost Itys, mine and thine,
In the melancholy cry
Of a mother's agony.
Echo, ere the murmurs fade,
Bear them from the yew tree's shade
To the throne of Jove; and there,
Phœbus with his golden hair

Listens long, and loves to suit
To his ivory-mounted lute
Thy sad music ; at the sound
All the gods come dancing round,
And a sympathetic song
Peals from the immortal throng.

GOOD NIGHT TO THE SEASON.

"So runs the world away."—*Hamlet.*

GOOD night to the Season !—'Tis over !
  Gay dwellings no longer are gay ;
The courtier, the gambler, the lover,
  Are scattered like swallows away :
There's nobody left to invite one
  Except my good uncle and spouse ;
My mistress is bathing at Brighton,
  My patron is sailing at Cowes :
For want of a better enjoyment,
  Till Ponto and Don can get out,
I'll cultivate rural employment,
  And angle immensely for trout.

Good night to the Season !—the lobbies,
  Their changes, and rumours of change,
Which startled the rustic Sir Bobbies,
  And made all the Bishops look strange ;
The breaches, and battles, and blunders,
  Performed by the Commons and Peers ;
The Marquis's eloquent blunders,
  The Baronet's eloquent ears ;

Denouncings of Papists and treasons,
  Of foreign dominion and oats ;
Misrepresentations of reasons,
  And misunderstandings of notes.

Good night to the Season !—the buildings
  Enough to make Inigo sick ;
The paintings, and plasterings, and gildings
  Of stucco, and marble, and brick ;
The orders deliciously blended,
  From love of effect, into one ;
The club-houses only intended,
  The palaces only begun ;
The hell, where the fiend in his glory
  Sits staring at putty and stones,
And scrambles from storey to storey,
  To rattle at midnight his bones.

Good night to the Season !—the dances,
  The fillings of hot little rooms,
The glancings of rapturous glances,
  The fancyings of fancy costumes ;
The pleasures which Fashion makes duties,
  The praisings of fiddles and flutes,
The luxury of looking at Beauties,
  The tedium of talking to Mutes ;
The female diplomatists, planners
  Of matches for Laura and Jane ;
The ice of her Ladyship's manners,
  The ice of his Lordship's champagne.

Good night to the Season !—the rages
  Led off by the chiefs of the throng,
The Lady Matilda's new pages,
  The Lady Eliza's new song ;

Miss Fennel's macaw, which at Boodle's
  Was held to have something to say;
Mrs. Splenetic's musical poodles,
  Which bark *Batti*, *Batti*, all day;
The pony Sir Araby sported,
  As hot and as black as a coal,
And the Lion his mother imported,
  In bearskins and grease, from the Pole.

Good night to the Season!—the Toso,
  So very majestic and tall;
Miss Ayton, whose singing was so-so,
  And Pasta, divinest of all;
The labour in vain of the ballet,
  So sadly deficient in stars;
The foreigners thronging the Alley,
  Exhaling the breath of cigars;
The *loge* where some heiress (how killing!)
  Environed with exquisites sits,
The lovely one out of her drilling,
  The silly ones out of their wits.

Good night to the Season!—the splendour
  That beamed in the Spanish Bazaar;
Where I purchased—my heart was so tender—
  A card-case, a pasteboard guitar,
A bottle of perfume, a girdle,
  A lithographed Riego, full grown,
Whom bigotry drew on a hurdle
  That artists might draw him on stone;
A small panorama of Seville,
  A trap for demolishing flies,
A caricature of the Devil,
  And a look from Miss Sheridan's eyes.

Good night to the Season !—the flowers
  Of the grand Horticultural fête,
When boudoirs were quitted for bowers,
  And the fashion was—not to be late ;
When all who had money and leisure
  Grew rural o'er ices and wines,
All pleasantly toiling for pleasure,
  All hungrily pining for pines,
And making of beautiful speeches,
  And massing of beautiful shows,
And feeding on delicate peaches,
  And treading on delicate toes.

Good night to the Season !—Another
  Will come, with its trifles and toys,
And hurry away, like its brother,
  In sunshine, and odour, and noise.
Will it come with a rose or a briar?
  Will it come with a blessing or curse ?
Will its bonnets be lower or higher ?
  Will its morals be better or worse ?
Will it find me grown thinner or fatter,
  Or fonder of wrong or of right,
Or married—or buried ?—no matter :
  Good night to the Season—good night !

SONG.—YES OR NO.

The Baron de Vaux hath a valiant crest,—
  My Lady is fair and free ;
The Baron is full of mirth and jest,—
  My Lady is full of glee ;

But their path, we know, is a path of woe,
  And many the reason guess,—
The Baron will ever mutter "No"
  When my Lady whispers "Yes."

The Baron will pass the wine-cup round,—
  My Lady forth will roam;
The Baron will out with horse and hound,—
  My Lady sits at home;
The Baron will go to draw the bow,—
  My Lady will go to chess;
And the Baron will ever mutter "No"
  When my Lady whispers "Yes."

The Baron hath ears for a lovely lay,
  If my Lady sings it not;
The Baron is blind to a beauteous day,
  If it beam in my Lady's grot;
The Baron bows low to a furbelow,
  If it be not my Lady's dress;
And the Baron will ever mutter "No"
  When my Lady whispers "Yes."

Now saddle my steed, and helm my head,
  Be ready in the porch;
Stout Guy, with a ladder of silken thread,
  And trusty Will, with a torch;
The wind may blow, the torrent flow,—
  No matter,—on we press;
I never can hear the Baron's "No"
  When my Lady whispers "Yes."

UTOPIA.

——— "I can dream, sir,
If I eat well and sleep well."
—*The Mad Lover.*

If I could scare the light away,
No sun should ever shine;
If I could bid the clouds obey,
Thick darkness should be mine:
Where'er my weary footsteps roam,
I hate whate'er I see;
And Fancy builds a fairer home
In slumber's hour for me.

I had a vision yesternight
Of a lovelier land than this,
Where heaven was clothed in warmth and light,
Where earth was full of bliss;
And every tree was rich with fruits,
And every field with flowers,
And every zephyr wakened lutes
In passion-haunted bowers.

I clambered up a lofty rock,
And did not find it steep;
I read through a page and a half of Locke,
And did not fall asleep;
I said whate'er I may but feel,
I paid whate'er I owe;
And I danced one day an Irish reel,
With the gout in every toe.

And I was more than six feet high,
And fortunate, and wise;

And I had a voice of melody
  And beautiful black eyes;
My horses like the lightning went,
  My barrels carried true,
And I held my tongue at an argument,
  And winning cards at loo.

I saw an old Italian priest
  Who spoke without disguise;
I dined with a judge who swore, like Best,
  All libels should be lies:
I bought for a penny a twopenny loaf,
  Of wheat, and nothing more;
I danced with a female *philosophe*,
  Who was not quite a bore.

The kitchens there had richer roast,
  The sheep wore whiter wool;
I read a witty *Morning Post*,
  And an innocent *John Bull:*
The gaolers had nothing at all to do,
  The hangman looked forlorn,
And the Peers had passed a vote or two
  For freedom of trade in corn.

There was a crop of wheat, which grew
  Where plough was never brought;
There was a noble lord, who knew
  What he was never taught:
A scheme appeared in the *Gazette*
  For a lottery with no blanks;
And a Parliament had lately met,
  Without a single Bankes.

And there were kings who never went
  To cuffs for half-a-crown;

And lawyers who were eloquent
  Without a wig and gown;
And sportsmen who forebore to praise
  Their greyhounds and their guns;
And poets who deserved the bays,
  And did not dread the duns.

And boroughs were bought without a test,
  And no man feared the Pope;
And the Irish cabins were all possessed
  Of liberty and soap;
And the Chancellor, feeling very sick,
  Had just resigned the seals;
And a clever little Catholic
  Was hearing Scotch appeals.

I went one day to a Court of Law
  Where a fee had been refused;
And a Public School I really saw
  Where the rod was never used;
And the sugar still was very sweet,
  Though all the slaves were free;
And all the folk in Downing Street
  Had learnt the rule of three.

There love had never a fear or doubt,
  December breathed like June:
The Prima Donna ne'er was out
  Of temper—or of tune;
The streets were paved with mutton pies,
  Potatoes ate like pine;
Nothing looked black but a woman's eyes;
  Nothing grew old but wine.

It was an idle dream; but thou,
  The worshipped one, wert there,

With thy dark clear eyes and beaming brow,
  White neck and floating hair;
And oh, I had an honest heart,
  And a house of Portland stone;
And thou wert dear, as still thou art,
  And more than dear, my own!

Oh bitterness!—the morning broke
  Alike for boor and bard;
And thou wert married when I woke,
  And all the rest was marred:
And toil and trouble, noise and steam,
  Came back with the coming ray;
And, if I thought the dead could dream,
  I'd hang myself to-day!

MARRIAGE CHIMES.

——"Go together,
You precious winners all."
—*Winter's Tale.*

FAIR Lady, ere you put to sea,
  You and your mate together,
I meant to hail you lovingly,
  And wish you pleasant weather.
I took my fiddle from the shelf,
  But vain was all my labour;
For still I thought about myself,
  And not about my neighbour.

Safe from the perils of the war,
  Nor killed, nor hurt, nor missing—

Since many things in common are
  Between campaigns and kissing—
Ungrazed by glance, unbound by ring,
  Love's carte and tierce I've parried,
While half my friends are marrying,
  And half—good lack !—are married.

'Tis strange—but I have passed alive
  Where darts and deaths were plenty,
Until I find my twenty-five
  As lonely as my twenty :
And many lips have sadly sighed—
  Which were not made for sighing,
And many hearts have darkly died—
  Which never dreamed of dying.

Some victims fluttered like a fly,
  Some languished like a lily ;
Some told their tale in poetry,
  And some in Piccadilly :
Some yielded to a Spanish hat,
  Some to a Turkish sandal ;
Hosts suffered from an *entrechat*,
  And one or two from Handel.

Good Sterling said no dame should come
  To be the queen of his bourn,
But one who only prized her home,
  Her spinning wheel, and Gisborne :
And Mrs. Sterling says odd things
  With most sublime effront'ry ;
Gives lectures on elliptic springs,
  And follows hounds 'cross country.

Sir Roger had a Briton's pride
  In freedom, plough, and furrow;—
No fortune hath Sir Roger's bride,
  Except a rotten borough;
Gustavus longed for truth and crumbs,
  Contentment and a cottage;—
His Laura brings a pair of *plums*
  To boil the poor man's pottage.

My rural coz, who loves his peace,
  And swore at scientifics,
Is flirting with a lecturer's niece,
  Who construes hieroglyphics:
And Foppery's fool, who hated blues
  Worse than he hated Holborn,
Is raving of a pensive Muse,
  Who does the verse for Colburn.

And Vyvyan, Humour's crazy child,—
  Whose worship, whim, or passion,
Was still for something strange and wild,
  Wit, wickedness, or fashion,—
Is happy with a little Love,
  A parson's pretty daughter,
As tender as a turtle-dove,—
  As dull as milk and water.

And Gerard hath his Northern Fay—
  His nymph of mirth and haggis;
And Courtenay wins a damsel gay
  Who figures at Colnaghi's;
And Davenant now has drawn a prize,—
  I hope and trust, a Venus,
Because there are some sympathies—
  As well as leagues—between us.

Thus north and south, and east and west,
  The chimes of Hymen jingle;
But I shall wander on, unblest,
  And singularly single;
Light-pursed, light-hearted, addle-brained,
  And often captivated,
Yet, save on circuit—unretained,
  And, save at chess—unmated.

Yet oh!—if Nemesis with me
  Should sport, as with my betters,
And put me on my awkward knee,
  To prate of flowers and fetters,—
I know not whose the eyes should be
  To make this fortress tremble;
But yesternight I dreamt,—ah me!
  Whose they should most resemble!

REMEMBER ME.

In Seville, when the feast was long,
  And lips and lutes grew free,
At Inez feet, amid the throng,
  A masquer bent his knee;
And still the burden of his song
  Was "Sweet, remember me!

"Remember me in shine and shower,
  In sorrow and in glee;
When summer breathes upon the flower,
  When winter blasts the tree,
When there are dances in the bower
  Or sails upon the sea.

"Remember me beneath far skies,
  Or foreign lawn or lea;
When others worship those wild eyes
  Which I no more may see,
When others wake the melodies
  Of which I mar the key.

"Remember me! my heart will claim
  No love, no trust, from thee;
Remember me, though doubt and blame
  Linked with the record be;
Remember me,—with scorn or shame,—
  But yet, remember me!"

THE FANCY BALL.

"A visor for a visor! What care I
  What curious eye doth quote deformities?"
—*Romeo and Juliet.*

"You used to talk," said Miss MacCall,
  "Of flowers, and flames, and Cupid;
But now you never talk at all;
  You're getting vastly stupid:
You'd better burn your Blackstone, sir,
  You never will get through it;
There's a Fancy Ball at Winchester,—
  Do let us take you to it!"

I made that night a solemn vow
  To startle all beholders;
I wore white muslin on the brow,
  Green velvet on my shoulders;

My trousers were supremely wide,
  I learnt to swear "by Allah!"
I stuck a poniard by my side,
  And called myself "Abdallah."

Oh, a fancy ball's a strange affair!
  Made up of silk and leathers,
Light heads, light heels, false hearts, false hair,
  Pins, paint, and ostrich feathers:
The dullest duke in all the town,
  To-day may shine a droll one;
And rakes, who have not half-a-crown,
  Look royal in a whole one.

Go, call the lawyer from his pleas,
  The schoolboy from his Latin;
Be stoics here in ecstasies,
  And savages in satin;
Let young and old forego—forget
  Their labour and their sorrow,
And none—except the Cabinet—
  Take counsel for the morrow.

Begone, dull care! This life of ours
  Is very dark and chilly;
We'll sleep through all its serious hours,
  And laugh through all its silly.
Be mine such motley scene as this,
  Where, by established usance,
Miss Gravity is quite amiss,
  And Madam Sense a nuisance!

Hail, blest Confusion! here are met
  All tongues and times and faces,
The Lancers flirt with Juliet,
  The Brahmin talks of races;

And where's your genuis, bright Corinne?
  And where's your brogue, Sir Lucius?
And Chinca Ti, you have not seen
  One chapter of Confucius.

Lo! dandies from Kamschatka flirt
  With Beauties from the Wrekin;
And belles from Berne look very pert
  On Mandarins from Pekin;
The Cardinal is here from Rome,
  The Commandant from Seville;
And Hamlet's father from the tomb,
  And Faustus from the Devil.

O sweet Anne Page!—those dancing eyes
  Have peril in their splendour!
"O sweet Anne Page!"—so Slender sighs,
  And what am I, but slender?
Alas! when next your spells engage
  So fond and starved a sinner,
My pretty Page, be Shakespeare's Page,
  And ask the fool to dinner!

What mean those laughing Nuns, I pray,
  What mean they, nun or fairy?
I guess they told no beads to-day,
  And sang no Ave Mary:
From mass and matins, priest and pyx,
  Barred door, and window grated,
I wish all pretty Catholics
  Were thus emancipated!

Four seasons come to dance quadrilles
  With four well-seasoned sailors;
And Raleigh talks of rail-road bills
  With Timon, prince of railers;

I find Sir Charles of Aubyn Park
  Equipt for a walk to Mecca;
And I run away from Joan of Arc,
  To romp with sad Rebecca.

Fair Cleopatra's very plain;
  Puck halts, and Ariel swaggers;
And Cæsar's murdered o'er again,
  Though not by Roman daggers:
Great Charlemagne is four feet high;
  Sad stuff has Bacon spoken;
Queen Mary's waist is all awry,
  And Psyche's nose is broken.

Our happiest bride—how very odd!—
  Is the mourning Isabella;
And the heaviest foot that ever trod
  Is the foot of Cinderella;
Here sad Calista laughs outright,
  There Yorick looks most grave, sir,
And a Templar waves the cross to-night,
  Who never crossed the wave, sir!

And what a Babel is the talk!
  "The Giraffe"—"plays the fiddle"—
"Macadam's roads"—"I hate this chalk!"—
  "Sweet girl"—"a charming riddle"—
"I'm nearly drunk with"—"Epsom salts"—
  "Yes, separate beds"—"such cronies!"
"Good Heaven! who taught that man to waltz?"—
  "A pair of Shetland ponies."

"Lord Nugent"—"an enchanting shape"—
  "Will move for"—"Maraschino"—
"Pray, Julia, how's your mother's ape?"—
  "He died at Navarino!"—

"The gout, by Jove, is"—"apple pie"—
"Don Miguel"—"Tom the tinker"—
"His Lordship's pedigree's as high
As"—"Whipcord, dam by Clinker."

"Love's shafts are weak"—"my chestnut kicks"—
"Heart-broken"—"broke the traces"—
"What say you now of politics?"—
"Change hands and to your places."—
"A five-barred gate"—"a precious pearl"—
"Grave things may all be punned on!"—
"The Whigs, thank Heaven, are"—"out of curl!"—
"Her age is"—"four by London!"

Thus run the giddy hours away,
The morning's light is beaming,
And we must go to dream by day
All we to-night are dreaming,—
To smile and sigh, to love and change:
Oh, in our hearts' recesses,
We dress in fancies quite as strange
As these our fancy dresses!

A LETTER OF ADVICE.

(*From Miss Medora Trevilian, at Padua, to Miss Araminta Vavasour, in London.*)

"Enfin, monsieur, un homme aimable;
Voilà pourquoi je ne saurais l'aimer"
—SCRIBE.

YOU tell me you're promised a lover,
My own Araminta, next week;
Why cannot my fancy discover
The hue of his coat and his cheek?

Alas ! if he look like another,
  A vicar, a banker, a beau,
Be deaf to your father and mother,
  My own Araminta, say "No !"

Miss Lane, at her Temple of Fashion,
  Taught us both how to sing and to speak,
And we loved one another with passion,
  Before we had been there a week :
You gave me a ring for a token ;
  I wear it wherever I go ;
I gave you a chain,—is it broken ?
  My own Araminta, say "No !"

O think of our favourite cottage,
  And think of our dear Lalla Rookh !
How we shared with the milkmaids their pottage,
  And drank of the stream from the brook ;
How fondly our loving lips faltered
  "What further can grandeur bestow ?"
My heart is the same ;—is yours altered ?
  My own Araminta, say "No !"

Remember the thrilling romances
  We read on the bank in the glen ;
Remember the suitors our fancies
  Would picture for both of us then.
They wore the red cross on their shoulder,
  They had vanquished and pardoned their foe—
Sweet friend, are you wiser or colder ?
  My own Araminta, say "No !"

You know when Lord Rigmarole's carriage
  Drove off with your cousin Justine,
You wept, dearest girl, at the marriage,
  And whispered, "How base she has been !"

You said you were sure it would kill you,
  If ever your husband looked so ;
And you will not apostatise,—will you ?
  My own Araminta, say "No !"

When I heard I was going abroad, love,
  I thought I was going to die ;
We walked arm-in-arm to the road, love,
  We looked arm-in-arm to the sky ;
And I said, "When a foreign postilion
  Has hurried me off to the Po,
Forget not Medora Trevilian :
  My own Araminta, say 'No !'".

We parted ! but sympathy's fetters
  Reach far over valley and hill ;
I muse o'er your exquisite letters,
  And feel that your heart is mine still ;
And he who would share it with me, love,—
  The richest of treasures below,—
If he's not what Orlando should be, love,
  My own Araminta, say "No !"

If he wears a top-boot in his wooing,
  If he comes to you riding a cob,
If he talks of his baking or brewing,
  If he puts up his feet on the hob,
If he ever drinks port after dinner,
  If his brow or his breeding is low,
If he calls himself "Thompson" or "Skinner,
  My own Araminta, say "No !"

If he studies the news in the papers
  While you are preparing the tea,
If he talks of the damps or the vapours
  While moonlight lies soft on the sea,

If he's sleepy while you are capricious,
  If he has not a musical "Oh!"
If he does not call Werther delicious,—
  My own Araminta, say "No!"

If he ever sets foot in the City
  Among the stockbrokers and Jews,
If he has not a heart full of pity,
  If he don't stand six feet in his shoes,
If his lips are not redder than roses,
  If his hands are not whiter than snow,
If he has not the model of noses,—
  My own Araminta, say "No!"

If he speaks of a tax or a duty,
  If he does not look grand on his knees,
If he's blind to a landscape of beauty,
  Hills, valleys, rocks, water, and trees,
If he dotes not on desolate towers,
  If he likes not to hear the blast blow,
If he knows not the language of flowers,—
  My own Araminta, say "No!"

He must walk—like a god of old story
  Come down from the home of his rest;
He must smile—like the sun in his glory
  On the bud, he loves ever the best;
And oh! from its ivory portal
  Like music his soft speech must flow!
If he speak, smile, or walk like a mortal,
  My own Araminta, say "No!"

Don't listen to tales of his bounty,
  Don't hear what they say of his birth,
Don't look at his seat in the county,
  Don't calculate what he is worth;

But give him a theme to write verse on,
  And see if he turns out his toe;
If he's only an excellent person,—
  My own Araminta, say "No!"

EVERY-DAY CHARACTERS.

I.

THE VICAR.

SOME years ago, ere time and taste
  Had turned our parish topsy-turvy,
When Darnel Park was Darnel waste,
  And roads as little known as scurvy,
The man who lost his way, between
  St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket,
Was always shown across the green,
  And guided to the Parson's wicket.

Back flew the bolt of lissom lath;
  Fair Margaret, in her tidy kirtle,
Led the lorn traveller up the path,
  Through clean-clipt rows of box and myrtle;
And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray,
  Upon the parlour steps collected,
Wagged all their tails, and seemed to say—
  "Our master knows you—you're expected."

Up rose the Reverend Dr. Brown,
  Up rose the Doctor's winsome marrow;
The lady laid her knitting down,
  Her husband clasped his ponderous Barrow;

Whate'er the stranger's caste or creed,
  Pundit or Papist, saint or sinner,
He found a stable for his steed,
  And welcome for himself, and dinner.

If, when he reached his journey's end,
  And warmed himself in Court or College,
He had not gained an honest friend
  And twenty curious scraps of knowledge,—
If he departed as he came,
  With no new light on love or liquor,—
Good sooth, the traveller was to blame,
  And not the Vicarage, nor the Vicar.

His talk was like a stream, which runs
  With rapid change from rocks to roses:
It slipped from politics to puns,
  It passed from Mahomet to Moses;
Beginning with the laws which keep
  The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
  For dressing eels or shoeing horses.

He was a shrewd and sound Divine,
  Of loud Dissent the mortal terror;
And when, by dint of page and line,
  He 'stablished Truth, or startled Error,
The Baptist found him far too deep;
  The Deist sighed with saving sorrow;
And the lean Levite went to sleep,
  And dreamed of tasting pork to-morrow.

His sermon never said or showed
  That Earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,
Without refreshment on the road
  From Jerome or from Athanasius:

And sure a righteous zeal inspired [them,
  The hand and head that penned and planned
For all who understood admired,
  And some who did not understand them.

He wrote, too, in a quiet way,
  Small treatises, and smaller verses,
And sage remarks on chalk and clay,
  And hints to noble Lords—and nurses;
True histories of last year's ghost,
  Lines to a ringlet, or a turban,
And trifles for the *Morning Post*,
  And nothings for Sylvanus Urban.

He did not think all mischief fair,
  Although he had a knack of joking;
He did not make himself a bear,
  Although he had a taste for smoking;
And when religious sects ran mad,
  He held, in spite of all his learning,
That if a man's belief is bad,
  It will not be improved by burning.

And he was kind, and loved to sit
  In the low hut or garnished cottage,
And praise the farmer's homely wit,
  And share the widow's homelier pottage:
At his approach complaint grew mild;
  And when his hand unbarred the shutter,
The clammy lips of fever smiled
  The welcome which they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me
  Of Julius Cæsar, or of Venus;
From him I learnt the rule of three,
  Cat's cradle, leap-frog, and *Quæ genus;*

I used to singe his powdered wig,
  To steal the staff he put such trust in,
And make the puppy dance a jig,
  When he began to quote Augustine.

Alack the change! in vain I look
  For haunts in which my boyhood trifled,—
The level lawn, the trickling brook,
  The trees I climbed, the beds I rifled:
The church is larger than before;
  You reach it by a carriage entry;
It holds three hundred people more,
  And pews are fitted up for gentry.

Sit in the Vicar's seat: you'll hear
  The doctrine of a gentle Johnian,
Whose hand is white, whose tone is clear,
  Whose phrase is very Ciceronian.
Where is the old man laid?—look down,
  And construe on the slab before you,
"*Hic jacet GVLIELMVS BROWN*
  Vir nullâ non donandus lauru."

II.

QUINCE.

"Fallentis semita vitæ."—HOR.

NEAR a small village in the West,
  Where many worthy people
Eat, drink, play whist, and do their best
  To guard from evil Church and steeple,

There stood—alas ! it stands no more !—
  A tenement of brick and plaster,
Of which, for forty years and four,
  My good friend Quince was lord and master.

Welcome was he in hut and hall
  To maids and matrons, peers and peasants ;
He won the sympathies of all
  By making puns, and making presents.
Though all the parish were at strife,
  He kept his counsel, and his carriage,
And laughed, and loved a quiet life,
  And shrank from Chancery suits—and marriage.

Sound was his claret—and his head ;
  Warm was his double ale—and feelings ;
His partner at the whist club said
  That he was faultless in his dealings :
He went to church but once a week ;
  Yet Dr. Poundtext always found him
An upright man, who studied Greek,
  And liked to see his friends around him.

Asylums, hospitals, and schools,
  He used to swear, were made to cozen ;
All who subscribed to them were fools,—
  And he subscribed to half-a-dozen :
It was his doctrine that the poor
  Were always able, never willing ;
And so the beggar at his door
  Had first abuse, and then—a shilling.

Some public principles he had,
  But was no flatterer, nor fretter ;
He rapped his box when things were bad,
  And said. " I cannot make them better !"

And much he loathed the patriot's snort,
  And much he scorned the placeman's snuffle;
And cut the fiercest quarrels short
  With—"Patience, gentlemen—and shuffle!"

For full ten years his pointer Speed
  Had couched beneath her master's table;
For twice ten years his old white steed
  Had fattened in his master's stable;
Old Quince averred, upon his troth,
  They were the ugliest beasts in Devon;
And none knew why he fed them both,
  With his own hands, six days in seven.

Whene'er they heard his ring or knock,
  Quicker than thought, the village slatterns
Flung down the novel, smoothed the frock,
  And took up Mrs. Glasse, and patterns;
Adine was studying baker's bills;
  Louisa looked the queen of knitters;
Jane happened to be hemming frills;
  And Bell, by chance, was making fritters.

But all was vain; and while decay
  Came, like a tranquil moonlight, o'er him,
And found him gouty still, and gay,
  With no fair nurse to bless or bore him,
His rugged smile and easy chair,
  His dread of matrimonial lectures,
His wig, his stick, his powdered hair,
  Were themes for very strange conjectures.

Some sages thought the stars above
  Had crazed him with excess of knowledge;
Some heard he had been crost in love
  Before he came away from college;

Some darkly hinted that his Grace
  Did nothing, great or small, without him;
Some whispered, with a solemn face,
  That there was "something odd about him!"

I found him, at three score and ten,
  A single man, but bent quite double;
Sickness was coming on him then
  To take him from a world of trouble:
He prosed of slipping down the hill,
  Discovered he grew older daily;
One frosty day he made his will,—
  The next, he sent for Doctor Bailey.

And so he lived,—and so he died!—
  When last I sat beside his pillow
He shook my hand, and "Ah!" he cried,
  "Penelope must wear the willow.
Tell her I hugged her rosy chain
  While life was flickering in the socket;
And say, that when I call again,
  I'll bring a licence in my pocket.

"I've left my house and grounds to Fag,—
  I hope his master's shoes will suit him;
And I've bequeathed to you my nag,
  To feed him for my sake,—or shoot him.
The Vicar's wife will take old Fox,—
  She'll find him an uncommon mouser,—
And let her husband have my box,
  My bible, and my Assmanshauser.

"Whether I ought to die or not,
  My doctor cannot quite determine;
It's only clear that I shall rot,
  And be, like Priam, food for vermin.

My debts are paid :—but Nature's debt
  Almost escaped my recollection :
Tom !—we shall meet again ;—and yet
  I cannot leave you my direction ! "

III.

THE BELLE OF THE BALL-ROOM.

"Il faut juger des femmes depuis la chaussure jusqu' à la coiffure exclusivement, á peu prés comme on mesure le poisson entre queue et tête."—La BRUYERE.

YEARS—years ago,—ere yet my dreams
  Had been of being wise or witty,—
Ere I had done with writing themes,
  Or yawned o'er this infernal Chitty ;—
Years—years ago,—while all my joy
  Was in my fowling-piece and filly,—
In short, while I was yet a boy,
  I fell in love with Laura Lily.

I saw her at the County Ball :
  There, when the sound of flute and fiddle
Gave signal sweet in that old hall
  Of hands across and down the middle,
Her's was the subtlest spell by far
  Of all that set young hearts romancing ;
She was our queen, our rose, our star ;
  And then she danced—O Heaven, her dancing !

Dark was her hair, her hand was white ;
  Her voice was exquisitely tender ;
Her eyes were full of liquid light ;
  I never saw a waist so slender !

Her every look, her every smile,
  Shot right and left a score of arrows;
I thought 'twas Venus from her isle,
  And wondered where she'd left her sparrows.

She talked,—of politics or prayers,—
  Of Southey's prose or Wordsworth's sonnets,—
Of danglers—or of dancing bears,
  Of battles,—or the last new bonnets,
By candlelight, at twelve o'clock,
  To me it mattered not a tittle;
If those bright lips had quoted Locke,
  I might have thought they murmured Little.

Through sunny May, through sultry June,
  I loved her with a love eternal;
I spoke her praises to the moon,
  I wrote them to the *Sunday Journal:*
My mother laughed; I soon found out
  That ancient ladies have no feeling:
My father frowned; but how should gout
  See any happiness in kneeling?

She was the daughter of a Dean,
  Rich, fat, and rather apoplectic;
She had one brother, just thirteen.
  Whose colour was extremely hectic;
Her grandmother for many a year
  Had fed the parish with her bounty;
Her second cousin was a peer,
  And Lord Lieutenant of the county.

But titles, and the three per cents,
  And mortgages, and great relations,
And India bonds, and tithes, and rents,
  Oh what are they to love's sensations?

Black eyes, fair forehead, clustering locks—
  Such wealth, such honours, Cupid chooses ;
He cares as little for the stocks
  As Baron Rothschild for the Muses.

She sketched ; the vale, the wood, the beach,
  Grew lovelier from her pencil's shading :
She botanised ; I envied each
  Young blossom in her boudoir fading :
She warbled Handel ; it was grand ;
  She made the Catalani jealous :
She touched the organ ; I could stand
  For hours and hours to blow the bellows.

She kept an album, too, at home,
  Well filled with all an album's glories ;
Paintings of butterflies, and Rome,
  Patterns for trimmings, Persian stories ;
Soft songs to Julia's cockatoo,
  Fierce odes to Famine and to Slaughter,
And autographs of Prince Leboo,
  And recipes for elder water.

And she was flattered, worshipped, bored ;
  Her steps were watched, her dress was noted ;
Her poodle dog was quite adored,
  Her sayings were extremely quoted ;
She laughed, and every heart was glad,
  As if the taxes were abolished ;
She frowned, and every look was sad,
  As if the opera were demolished.

She smiled on many, just for fun—
  I knew that there was nothing in it ;
I was the first—the only one,
  Her heart had thought of for a minute.

I knew it, for she told me so,
  In phrase which was divinely moulded;
She wrote a charming hand—and oh!
  How sweetly all her notes were folded!

Our love was like most other loves;—
  A little glow, a little shiver,
A rose-bud, and a pair of gloves,
  And "Fly not yet"—upon the river;
Some jealousy of some one's heir,
  Some hope of dying broken-hearted,
A miniature, a lock of hair,
  The usual vows,—and then we parted.

We parted; months and years rolled by;
  We met again four summers after:
Our parting was all sob and sigh;
  Our meeting was all mirth and laughter:
For in my heart's most secret cell
  There had been many other lodgers;
And she was not the ball-room's Belle,
  But only—Mrs. Something Rogers!

IV.

MY PARTNER.

"There is, perhaps, no subject of more universal interest in the whole range of natural knowledge, than that of the increasing fluctuations which take place in the atmosphere in which we are immersed." —*British Almanac.*

At Cheltenham, where one drinks one's fill
  Of folly and cold water,
I danced last year my first quadrille
  With old Sir Geoffrey's daughter.

Her cheek with summer's rose might vie,
  When summer's rose is newest;
Her eyes were blue as autumn's sky,
  When autumn's sky is bluest;
And well my heart might deem her one
  Of life's most precious flowers,
For half her thoughts were of its sun,
  And half were of its showers.

I spoke of novels:—*Vivian Grey*
  Was positively charming,
And *Almack's* infinitely gay,
  And *Frankenstein* alarming;
I said *De Vere* was chastely told,
  Thought well of *Herbert Lacy*,
Called Mr. Banim's sketches "bold,"
  And Lady Morgan's "racy."
I vowed that last new thing of Hook's
  Was vastly entertaining;
And Laura said,—"I doat on books,
  Because its always raining!"

I talked of Music's gorgeous fane;
  I raved about Rossini,
Hoped Renzi would come back again,
  And criticised Pacini;
I wished the chorus-singers dumb,
  The trumpets more pacific,
And eulogised Brocard's *aplomb*,
  And voted Paul "terrific!"
What cared she for Medea's pride,
  Or Desdemona's sorrow?
"Alas!" my beauteous listener sighed,
  "We must have rain to-morrow!"

I told her tales of other lands;
  Of ever-boiling fountains,
Of poisonous lakes and barren sands,
  Vast forests, trackless mountains:
I painted bright Italian skies,
  I lauded Persian roses,
Coined similes for Spanish eyes,
  And jests for Indian noses;
I laughed at Lisbon's love of mass,
  Vienna's dread of treason:
And Laura asked me—where the glass
  Stood, at Madrid, last season?

I broached whate'er had gone its rounds,
  The week before, of scandal;
What made Sir Luke lay down his hounds,
  And Jane take up her Handel;
Why Julia walked upon the heath,
  With the pale moon above her;
Where Flora lost her false front teeth,
  And Anne her falser lover;
How Lord de B. and Mrs. L.
  Had crossed the sea together:
My shuddering partner cried, "O Ciel!
  How *could* they,—in such weather?"

Was she a Blue?—I put my trust
  In strata, petals, gases;
A boudoir-pedant? I discussed
  The toga and the fasces;
A Cockney-Muse? I mouthed a deal
  Of folly from "Endymion;"
A saint? I praised the pious zeal
  Of Messrs. Way & Simeon;

A politician ?—it was vain
  To quote the morning paper ;
The horrid phantoms came again,
  Rain, Hail, and Snow, and Vapour.

Flat flattery was my only chance;
  I acted deep devotion,
Found magic in her every glance,
  Grace in her every motion ;
I wasted all a stripling's lore,
  Prayer, passion, folly, feeling ;
And wildly looked upon the floor,
  And mildly on the ceiling.
I envied gloves upon her arm
  And shawls upon her shoulder ;
And, when my worship was most warm,
  She—" never found it colder."

I don't object to wealth or land ;
  And she will have the giving
Of an extremely pretty hand,
  Some thousands, and a living.
She makes silk purses, broiders stools,
  Sings sweetly, dances finely,
Paints screens, subscribes to Sunday-schools,
  And sits a horse divinely.
But to be linked in life to her !—
  The desperate man who tried it
Might marry a Barometer
  And hang himself beside it !

V.

PORTRAIT OF A LADY

IN THE EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY, 1831.

WHAT are you, lady?—naught is here
  To tell us of your name or story,
To claim the gazer's smile or tear,
  To dub you Whig or damn you Tory;
It is beyond a poet's skill
  To form the slightest notion whether
We e'er shall walk through one quadrille,
  Or look upon one moon together.

You're very pretty!—all the world
  Is talking of your bright brow's splendour,
And of your locks, so softly curled,
  And of your hands, so white and slender;
Some think you're blooming in Bengal;
  Some say you're blowing in the City;
Some know you're nobody at all:
  I only feel—you're very pretty.

But bless my heart! it's very wrong;
  You're making all our belles ferocious;
Anne "never saw a chin so long;"
  And Laura thinks your dress "atrocious:"
And Lady Jane, who now and then
  Is taken for the village steeple,
Is sure you can't be four feet ten,
  And "wonders at the taste of people."

Soon pass the praises of a face;
  Swift fades the very best vermilion;

Fame rides a most prodigious pace;
  Oblivion follows on the pillion;
And all who in these sultry rooms
  To-day have stared, and pushed, and fainted,
Will soon forget your pearls and plumes,
  As if they never had been painted.

You'll be forgotten—as old debts
  By persons who are used to borrow;
Forgotten as the sun that sets,
  When shines a new one on the morrow;
Forgotten—like the luscious peach
  That blessed the schoolboy last September;
Forgotten like a maiden speech,
  Which all men praise, but none remember.

Yet, ere you sink into the stream
  That whelms alike sage, saint, and martyr,
And soldier's sword, and minstrel's theme,
  And Canning's wit, and Gatton's charter,
Here, of the fortunes of your youth,
  My fancy weaves her dim conjectures,
Which have, perhaps, as much of truth
  As passion's vows, or Cobbett's lectures.

Was't in the north, or in the south
  That summer breezes rocked your cradle?
And had you in your baby mouth
  A wooden or a silver ladle?
And was your first unconscious sleep
  By Brownie banned, or blessed by Fairy?
And did you wake to laugh or weep?
  And were you christened Maud or Mary?

And was your father called "Your Grace?"
  And did he bet at Ascot races?

And did he chat of commonplace?
  And did he fill a score of places?
And did your lady-mother's charms
  Consist in picklings, broilings, bastings?
Or did she prate about the arms
  Her brave forefathers wore at Hastings?

Where were you *finished?* tell me where?
  Was it at Chelsea or at Chiswick?
Had you the ordinary share
  Of books and backboard, harp and physic?
And did they bid you banish pride,
  And mind your Oriental tinting?
And did you learn how Dido died?
  And who found out the art of printing?

And are you fond of lanes and brooks—
  A votary of the sylvan Muses?
Or do you con the little books
  Which Baron Brougham and Vaux diffuses?
Or do you love to knit and sow—
  The fashionable world's Arachne?
Or do you canter down the Row
  Upon a very long-tailed hackney?

And do you love your brother James?
  And do you pet his mares and setters?
And have your friends romantic names?
  And do you write them long, long letters?
And are you—since the world began
  All women are—a little spiteful?
And don't you dote on Malibran?
  And don't you think Tom Moore delightful?

I see they've brought you flowers to-day;
  Delicious food for eyes and noses;

But carelessly you turn away
  From all the pinks and all the roses;
Say, is that fond look sent in search
  Of one whose look as fondly answers?
And is he, fairest, in the Church?
  Or is he—ain't he—in the Lancers?

And is your love a motley page
  Of black and white, half joy, half sorrow?
Are you to wait till you're of age?
  Or are you to be his to-morrow?
Or do they bid you, in their scorn,
  Your pure and sinless flame to smother?
Is he so very meanly born?
  Or are you married to another?

Whate'er you are, at last, adieu!
  I think it is your bounden duty
To let the rhymes I coin for you
  Be prized by all who prize your beauty.
From you I seek nor gold nor fame;
  From you I fear no cruel strictures;
I wish some girls that I could name
  Were half as silent as their pictures!

APRIL FOOLS.

——"passim
Palantes error certo de tramite pellit;
Ill sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit."
—HORACE.

THIS day, beyond all contradiction,
This day is all thine own, Queen Fiction!
And thou art building castles boundless
Of groundless joys, and griefs as groundless;

Assuring Beauties that the border
Of their new dress is out of order,
And schoolboys that their shoes want tying,
And babies that their dolls are dying.
Lend me—lend me some disguise;
I will tell prodigious lies;
All who care for what I say
Shall be April Fools to-day!

First, I relate how all the nation
Is ruined by Emancipation;
How honest men are sadly thwarted,
How beads and faggots are imported,
How every parish church looks thinner,
How Peel has asked the Pope to dinner;
And how the Duke who fought the duel,
Keeps good King George on water gruel.
Thus I waken doubts and fears
In the Commons and the Peers;
If they care for what I say,
They are April Fools to-day!

Next, I announce to hall and hovel
Lord Asterisk's unwritten novel;
It's full of wit, and full of fashion,
And full of taste, and full of passion;
It tells some very curious histories,
Elucidates some charming mysteries,
And mingles sketches of society
With precepts of the soundest piety.
Thus I babble to the host
Who adore the *Morning Post*;
If they care for what I say,
They are April Fools to-day!

Then to the artist of my raiment
I hint his bankers have stopped payment;
And just suggest to Lady Locket
That somebody has picked her pocket;
And scare Sir Thomas from the City
By murmuring, in a tone of pity,
That I am sure I saw my Lady
Drive through the Park with Captain Grady.
Off my troubled victims go,
Very pale and very low;
If they care for what I say,
They are April Fools to-day!

I've sent the learned Doctor Trepan
To feel Sir Hubert's broken knee-pan;
'Twill rout the Doctor's seven senses
To find Sir Hubert charging fences!
I've sent a sallow parchment-scraper
To put Miss Tim's last will on paper;
He'll see her, silent as a mummy,
At whist, with her two maids and dummy.
Man of brief, and man of pill,
They will take it very ill;
If they care for what I say,
They are April Fools to-day!

And then to her whose smile shed light on
My weary lot last year at Brighton
I talk of happiness and marriage,
St. George's, and a travelling carriage;
I trifle with my rosy fetters,
I rave about her witching letters,
And swear my heart shall do no treason
Before the closing of the season.

Thus I whisper in the ear
Of Louisa Windermere;
If she cares for what I say,
She's an April Fool to-day!

And to the world I publish gaily,
That all things are improving daily;
That suns grow warmer, streamlets clearer,
And faith more warm, and love sincerer;
That children grow extremely clever,
That sin is seldom known, or never;
That gas, and steam, and education,
Are killing sorrow and starvation!
Pleasant visions!—but alas,
How those pleasant visions pass!
If you care for what I say,
You're an April Fool to-day!

Last, to myself, when night comes round me,
And the soft chain of thought has bound me,
I whisper "Sir, your eyes are killing;
You owe no mortal man a shilling;
You never cringe for Star or Garter;
You're much too wise to be a martyr;
And, since you must be food for vermin,
You don't feel much desire for ermine!"
Wisdom is a mine, no doubt,
If one can but find it out;
But, whate'er I think or say,
I'm an April Fool to-day!

SCHOOL AND SCHOOLFELLOWS.

FLOREAT ETONA.

TWELVE years ago I made a mock
  Of filthy trades and traffics:
I wondered what they meant by stock;
  I wrote delightful sapphics;
I knew the streets of Rome and Troy,
  I supped with Fates and Furies,—
Twelve years ago I was a boy,
  A happy boy, at Drury's.

Twelve years ago!—how many a thought
  Of faded pains and pleasures
Those whispered syllables have brought
  From Memory's hoarded treasures!
The fields, the farms, the bats, the books,
  The glories and disgraces,
The voices of dear friends, the looks
  Of all familiar faces!

Kind *Mater* smiles again to me,
  As bright as when we parted;
I seem again the frank, the free,
  Stout-limbed, and simple-hearted!
Pursuing every idle dream,
  And shunning every warning;
With no hard work but Bovney stream,
  No chill except Long Morning:

Now stopping Harry Vernon's ball
  That rattled like a rocket;
Now hearing Wentworth's "Fourteen all!"
  And striking for the pocket;

Now feasting on a cheese and flitch,—
  Now drinking from the pewter;
Now leaping over Chalvey ditch,
  Now laughing at my tutor.

Where are my friends? I am alone;
  No playmate shares my beaker:
Some lie beneath the churchyard stone,
  And some—before the Speaker;
And some compose a tragedy,
  And some compose a rondeau;
And some draw sword for Liberty,
  And some draw pleas for John Doe.

Tom Mill was used to blacken eyes
  Without the fear of sessions;
Charles Medlar loathed false quantities
  As much as false professions;
Now Mill keeps order in the land,
  A magistrate pedantic;
And Medlar's feet repose unscanned
  Beneath the wide Atlantic.

Wild Nick, whose oaths made such a din,
  Does Dr. Martext's duty;
And Mullion, with that monstrous chin,
  Is married to a Beauty;
And Darrell studies, week by week,
  His Mant, and not his Manton;
And Ball, who was but poor in Greek,
  Is very rich at Canton.

And I am eight-and-twenty now;—
  The world's cold chains have bound me;
And darker shades are on my brow,
  And sadder scenes around me;

In Parliament I fill my seat,
  With many other noodles;
And lay my head in Jermyn Street
  And sip my hock at Boodle's.

But often when the cares of life
  Have sent my temples aching,
When visions haunt me of a wife,
  When duns await my waking,
When Lady Jane is in a pet,
  Or Hoby in a hurry,
When Captain Hazard wins a bet,
  Or Beaulieu spoils a curry,—

For hours and hours I think and talk
  Of each remembered hobby;
I long to lounge in Poet's walk,
  To shiver in the Lobby;
I wish that I could run away
  From House, and Court, and Leveé,
Where bearded men appear to-day
  Just Eton boys grown heavy,—

That I could bask in childhood's sun,
  And dance o'er childhood's roses,
And find huge wealth in one pound one,
  Vast wit in broken roses,
And play Sir Giles at Datchet Lane,
  And call the milk-maids Houris,—
That I could be a boy again,—
  A happy boy,—at Drury's.

ARRIVALS AT A WATERING-PLACE.

"I PLAY a spade.—Such strange new faces
  Are flocking in from near and far;
Such frights!—(Miss Dobbs holds all the aces)—
  One can't imagine who they are:
The lodgings at enormous prices,—
  New donkeys, and another fly;
And Madame Bonbon out of ices,
  Although we're scarcely in July:
We're quite as sociable as any,
  But one old horse can scarcely crawl;
And really, where there are so many
  We can't tell where we ought to call.

"Pray who has seen the odd old fellow
  Who took the Doctor's house last week?—
A pretty chariot,—livery yellow,
  Almost as yellow as his cheek;
A widower, sixty-five, and surly,
  And stiffer than a poplar tree;
Drinks rum and water, gets up early
  To dip his carcass in the sea;
He's always in a monstrous hurry,
  And always talking of Bengal;
They say his cook makes noble curry;
  I think, Louisa, we should call.

"And so Miss Jones, the mantua-maker,
  Has let her cottage on the hill!—
The drollest man,—a sugar baker
  Last year imported from the till;
Prates of his *'orses* and his *'oney*,
  Is quite in love with fields and farms;

A horrid Vandal,—but his money
  Will buy a glorious coat of arms;
Old Clyster makes him take the waters;
  Some say he means to give a ball;
And after all, with thirteen daughters,
  I think, Sir Thomas, you might call.

"That poor young man!—I'm sure and certain
  Despair is making up his shroud;
He walks all night beneath the curtain
  Of the dim sky and murky cloud:
Draws landscapes,—throws such mournful glances;
  Writes verses,—has such splendid eyes;
An ugly name,—but Laura fancies
  He's some great person in disguise!—
And since his dress is all the fashion,
  And since he's very dark and tall,
I think that out of pure compassion,
  I'll get Papa to go and call.

"So Lord St. Ives is occupying
  The whole of Mr. Ford's hotel!
Last Saturday his man was trying
  A little nag I want to sell.
He brought a lady in the carriage;
  Blue eyes,—eighteen, or thereabouts;—
Of course, you know, we *hope* it's marriage,
  But yet the *femme de chambre* doubts.
She looked so pensive when we met her,
  Poor thing!—and such a charming shawl!—
Well! till we understand it better,
  It's quite impossible to call!

"Old Mr. Fund, the London Banker,
  Arrived to-day at Premium Court;

I would not, for the world, cast anchor
  In such a horrid dangerous port;
Such dust and rubbish, lath and plaster,—
  (Contractors play the meanest tricks),—
The roof's as crazy as its master,
  And he was born in fifty-six;
Stairs creaking—cracks in every landing—
  The colonnade is sure to fall;
We shan't find post or pillar standing
  Unless we make great haste to call.

"Who was that sweetest of sweet creatures
  Last Sunday in the Rector's seat?
The finest shape,—the loveliest features,—
  I never saw such tiny feet!
My brother,—(this is quite between us)
  Poor Arthur,—'twas a sad affair;
Love at first sight!—she's quite a Venus,
  But then she's poorer far than fair;
And so my father and my mother
  Agreed it would not do at all;
And so, I'm sorry for my brother!—
  It's settled that we're not to call.

"And there's an author full of knowledge;
  And there's a captain on half-pay;
And there's a baronet from college,
  Who keeps a boy and rides a bay;
And sweet Sir Marcus from the Shannon,
  Fine specimen of brogue and bone;
And Dr. Calipel, the Canon,
  Who weighs, I fancy, twenty stone:
A maiden lady is adorning,
  The faded front of Lily Hall:—
Upon my word, the first fine morning,
  We'll make a round, my dear, and call."

Alas! disturb not, maid and matron,
  The swallow in my humble thatch;
Your son may find a better patron,
  Your niece may meet a better match:
I can't afford to give a dinner,
  I never was on Almack's list;
And since I seldom rise a winner,
  I never like to play at whist;
Unknown to me the stocks are falling,
  Unwatched by me the glass may fall:
Let all the world pursue its calling,—
  I'm not at home if people call.

TWENTY-EIGHT AND TWENTY-NINE.

"Rien n'est changé, mes amis!"—CHARLES X.

I HEARD a sick man's dying sigh,
  And an infant's idle laughter;
The Old Year went with mourning by,
  And the New came dancing after.
Let Sorrow shed her lonely tear,
  Let Revelry hold her ladle!
Bring boughs of cypress for the bier,
  Fling roses on the cradle:
Mutes to wait on the funeral state!
  Pages to pour the wine:
A requiem for Twenty-eight,
  And a health to Twenty-nine!

Alas for human happiness!
  Alas for human sorrow!
Our yesterday is nothingness,—
  What else will be our morrow?

Still Beauty must be stealing hearts,
  And Knavery stealing purses ;
Still cooks must live by making tarts,
  And wits by making verses :
While sages prate, and courts debate,
  The same stars set and shine ;
And the world, as it rolled through Twenty-eight,
  Must roll through Twenty-nine.

Some king will come, in Heaven's good time,
  To the tomb his father came to ;
Some thief will wade through blood and crime
  To a crown he has no claim to ;
Some suffering land will rend in twain
  The manacles that bound her,
And gather the links of the broken chain
  To fasten them proudly round her :
The grand and great will love and hate,
  And combat, and combine;
And much where we were in Twenty-eight
  We shall be in Twenty-nine.

O'Connell will toil to raise the rent,
  And Kenyon to sink the nation,
And Sheil will abuse the Parliament,
  And Peel the Association ;
And the thought of bayonets and swords
  Will make ex-chancellors merry,
And jokes will be cut in the House of Lords,
  And throats in the County Kerry;
And writers of weight will speculate
  On the Cabinet's design;
And just what it did in Twenty-eight
  It will do in Twenty-nine.

John Thomas Mugg, on the lonely hill,
  Will do a deed of mystery;
The *Morning Chronicle* will fill
  Five columns with the history.
The jury will be all surprise,
  The prisoner quite collected,
And Justice Park will wipe his eyes
  And be very much affected;
And folks will relate poor Corder's fate
  As they hurry home to dine,
Comparing the hangings of Twenty-eight
  With the hangings of Twenty-nine.

And the goddess of love will keep her smiles,
  And the god of cups his orgies,
And there'll be riots in St. Giles',
  And weddings in St. George's.
And mendicants will sup like kings,
  And lords will swear like lacqueys,
And black eyes oft will lead to rings,
  And rings will lead to black eyes;
And pretty Kate will scold her mate
  In a dialect all divine;
Alas! they married in Twenty-eight,—
  They will part in Twenty-nine!

And oh! I shall find how, day by day,
  All thoughts and things look older;
How the laugh of pleasure grows less gay,
  And the heart of friendship colder;
But still I shall be what I have been,
  Sworn foe to Lady Reason,
And seldom troubled with the spleen,
  And fond of talking treason:

I shall buckle my skate, and leap my gate,
  And throw—and write—my line;
And the woman I worshipped in Twenty-eight
  I shall worship in Twenty-nine!

LETTERS FROM TEIGNMOUTH.

I.

OUR BALL.

"Comment! cest lui? que je le regarde encore! C'est que
Vraiment il est bien changé; n'est-ce pas, mon papa?"
—*Les Premier Amours.*

YOU'LL come to our Ball;—since we parted,
  I've thought of you more than I'll say;
Indeed, I was half broken-hearted
  For a week, when they took you away.
Fond fancy brought back to my slumbers
  Our walks on the Ness and the Den,
And echoed the musical numbers
  Which you used to sing to me then.
I know the romance, since it's over,
  'Twere idle, or worse, to recall;
I know you're a terrible rover;
  But Clarence, you'll come to our Ball!

It's only a year, since, at College,
  You put on your cap and your gown;
But, Clarence, you're grown out of knowledge,
  And changed from the spur to the crown:
The voice that was best when it faltered
  Is fuller and firmer in tone,

And the smile that should never have altered—
  Dear Clarence—it is not your own:
Your cravat was badly selected;
  Your coat don't become you at all;
And why is your hair so neglected?
  You must have it curled for our Ball.

I've often been out upon Haldon
  To look for a covey with pup;
I've often been over to Shaldon,
  To see how your boat is laid up:
In spite of the terrors of Aunty,
  I've ridden the filly you broke;
And I've studied your sweet little Dante
  In the shade of your favourite oak:
When I sat in July to Sir Lawrence,
  I sat in your love of a shawl;
And I'll wear what you brought me from Florence,
  Perhaps, if you'll come to our Ball.

You'll find us all changed since you vanished;
  We've set up a National School;
And waltzing is utterly banished,
  And Ellen has married a fool;
The Major is going to travel,
  Miss Hyacinth threatens a rout,
The walk is laid down with fresh gravel,
  Papa is laid up with the gout;
And Jane has gone on with her easels,
  And Anne has gone off with Sir Paul;
And Fanny is sick with the measles,—
  And I'll tell you the rest at the Ball.

You'll meet all your Beauties; the Lily
  And the Fairy of Willowbrook Farm,

And Lucy, who made me so silly
  At Dawlish, by taking your arm;
Miss Manners, who always abused you
  For talking so much about Hock,
And her sister, who often amused you
  By raving of rebels and Rock;
And something which surely would answer,
  An heiress quite fresh from Bengal;
So though you were seldom a dancer,
  Yon'll dance, just for once, at our Ball.

But out on the World! from the flowers
  It shuts out the sunshine of truth:
It blights the green leaves in the bowers,
  It makes an old age of our youth;
And the flow of our feeling, once in it,
  Like a streamlet beginning to freeze,
Though it cannot turn ice in a minute,
  Grows harder by sudden degrees:
Time treads o'er the graves of affection;
  Sweet honey is turned into gall;
Perhaps you have no recollection
  That ever you danced at our Ball!

You once could be pleased with our ballads,—
  To-day you have critical ears;
You once could be charmed with our salads—
  Alas! you've been dining with Peers;
You trifled and flirted with many,—
  You've forgotten the when and the how;
There was one you liked better than any,—
  Perhaps you've forgotten her now.
But of those you remember most newly,
  Of those who delight or enthrall,
None loves you a quarter so truly
  As some you will find at our Ball.

They tell me you've many who flatter,
  Because of your wit and your song:
They tell me—and what does it matter?—
  You like to be praised by the throng:
They tell me you're shadowed with laurel:
  They tell me you're loved by a Blue:
They tell me you're sadly immoral—
  Dear Clarence, that cannot be true!
But to me, you are still what I found you,
  Before you grew clever and tall;
And you'll think of the spell that once bound you;
  And you'll come—won't you come?—to our
    Ball!

II.

PRIVATE THEATRICALS.

——"Sweet, when actors first appear,
The loud collision of applauding gloves."
—MOULTRIE.

YOUR labours, my talented brother,
  Are happily over at last:
They tell me—that, somehow or other,
  The Bill is rejected,—or passed;
And now you'll be coming, I'm certain,
  As fast as your posters can crawl,
To help us to draw up our curtain,
  As usual, at Fustian Hall.

Arrangements are nearly completed;
  But still we've a Lover or two,
Whom Lady Albina entreated
  We'd keep, at all hazards, for you:

Sir Arthur makes horrible faces;
  Lord John is a trifle too tall;
And yours are the safest embraces
  To faint in, at Fustian Hall.

Come, Clarence;—its really enchanting
  To listen and look at the rout:
We're all of us puffing and panting,
  And raving, and running about;
Here Kitty and Adelaide bustle;
  There Andrew and Anthony bawl;
Flutes murmur—chains rattle—robes rustle
  In chorus, at Fustian Hall.

By-the-by, there are two or three matters
  We want you to bring us from town:
The Inca's white plumes from the hatter's,
  A nose and a hump for the clown;
We want a few harps for our banquet,
  We want a few masks for our ball;
And steal from your wise friend Bosanquet
  His white wig, for Fustian Hall!

Hunca Munca must have a huge sabre;
  Friar Tuck has forgotten his cowl;
And we're quite at a stand-still with Weber
  For want of a lizard and owl:
And then, for our funeral procession,
  Pray get us a love of a pall,—
Or how shall we make an impression
  On feelings, at Fustian Hall?

And, Clarence, you'll really delight us,
  If you'll do your endeavour to bring,
From the Club, a young person to write us
  Our prologue, and that sort of thing;

Poor Crotchet, who did them supremely,
  Is gone for a Judge to Bengal;
I fear we shall miss him extremely
  This season, at Fustian Hall.

Come, Clarence! your idol Albina
  Will make a sensation, I feel;
We all think there never was seen a
  Performer so like the O'Neill:
At rehearsals, her exquisite fury
  Has deeply affected us all;
For one tear that trickles at Drury,
  There'll be twenty at Fustian Hall!

Dread objects are scattered before her
  On purpose to harrow her soul;
She stares, till a deep spell comes o'er her,
  At a knife, or a cross, or a bowl.
The sword never seems to alarm her
  That hangs on a peg to the wall;
And she doats on thy rusty old armour,
  Lord Fustian, of Fustian Hall.

She stabbed a bright mirror this morning,—
  (Poor Kitty was quite out of breath!)—
And trampled, in anger and scorning,
  A bonnet and feathers to death.
But hark!—I've a part in "The Stranger,"—
  There's the Prompter's detestable call!
Come, Clarence—our Romeo and Ranger—
  We want you at Fustian Hall!

SONG.

TELL him I love him yet,
  As in that joyous time;
Tell him I ne'er forget,
  Though memory now be crime;
Tell him, when sad moonlight
  Is over earth and sea,
I dream of him by night,—
  He must not dream of me!

Tell him to go where Fame
  Looks proudly on the brave;
Tell him to win a name
  By deeds on land and wave;
Green—green upon his brow
  The laurel wreath shall be;
Although the laurel now
  May not be shared with me.

Tell him to smile again
  In Pleasure's dazzling throng,
To wear another's chain,
  To praise another's song.
Before the loveliest there
  I'd have him bend his knee,
And breathe to her the prayer
  He used to breathe to me.

And tell him, day by day,
  Life looks to me more dim;
I falter when I pray,
  Although I pray for him.

And bid him when I die,
  Come to our favourite tree ;
I shall not hear him sigh,—
  Then let him sigh for me !

CONFESSIONS.

From the Manuscript of a Sexagenarian.

In youth, when pen and fingers first
  Coined rhymes for all who choose to seek 'em,
Ere luring hope's gay bubbles burst,
  Or Chitty was my *vade mecum*,
Ere years had charactered my brow
  With the deep lines, that well become it,
Or told me that warm hearts could grow
  Cold as Mont Blanc's snow-covered summit—

When my slow step and solemn swing
  Were steadier and somewhat brisker,
When velvet collars were "the thing,"
  And long before I wore a whisker,
Ere I had measured six foot two,
  Or bought Havannas by the dozen,
I fell in love—as many do—
  She was an angel—hem—my cousin.

Sometimes my eye, its furtive glance
  Cast back on memory's shorthand record,
I wonder—if by any chance
  Life's future page will be so checkered !
My angel cousin !—ah ! her form—
  Her lofty brow—her curls of raven,
Eyes darker than the thunder-storm,
  Its lightnings flashing from their heaven.

Her lips with music eloquent
  As her own grand upright piano ;
No—never yet was Peri lent
  To earth like thee, sweet Adriana.
I may not—dare not—call to mind
  The joys that once my breast elated,
Though yet, methinks, the morning wind
  Sweeps over my ear, with thy tones freighted:

And then I pause, and turn aside
  From pleasure's throng of pangless-hearted,
To weep! No. Sentiment and pride
  Are by each other always thwarted!
I press my hand upon my brow,
  To still the throbbing pulse that heaves it,
Recall my boyhood's faltered vow,
  And marvel—if she still believes it.

But she is woman—and her heart,
  Like her tiara's brightest jewel,
Cold—hard—till kindled by some art,
  Then quenchless burns—itself its fuel—
So poets say. Well, let it pass,
  And those who list may yield it credit;
But as for constancy, alas!
  I've never known—I've only read it.

Love! 'tis a roving fire, at most
  The *cuerpo santa* of life's ocean;
Now flashing through the storm, now lost—
  Who trust, 'tis said, rue their devotion.
It may be, 'tis a mooted creed—
  I have my doubts, and it—believers,
Though one *is* faithless—where's the need
  Of shunning all—as gay deceivers?

I said I loved. I did. But ours
  Was felt, not growled hyæna fashion !
We wandered not at midnight hours,
  Some dignity restrained the passion !
We loved—I never stooped to woo ;
  We met—I always doffed my beaver ;
She smiled a careless "How d'ye do—
  Good morning, sir,"—I rose to leave her

She loved—she never told me so ;
  I never asked—I could not doubt it ;
For there were signs on cheek and brow ;
  And asking ! Love is known without it !
'Twas understood—we were content,
  And rode, and sang, and waltzed together !
Alone, without embarrassment
  We talked of something—not the weather !

Time rolled along—the parting hour
  With arrowy speed brought its distresses,
A kiss—a miniature—a flower—
  A ringlet from those raven tresses ;
And the tears that would unbidden start,
  (An hour, perhaps, and they had perished,)
In the far chambers of my heart,
  I swore her image should be cherished.

I've looked on peril—it has glared
  In fashionable forms upon me,
From levelled aim—from weapon bared—
  And doctors three attending on me !
But never did my sternness wane
  At pang by shot or steel imparted ;
I'd not recall that hour of pain
  For years of bliss—it passed—we parted.

We parted—though her tear-gemmed cheeks,
  Her heaving breast had thus unmanned me—
She quite forgot me in three weeks!
  And other beauties soon trepanned me.
We met—and did not find it hard
  Joy's overwhelming tide to smother—
There was a "Mrs." on her card,
  And I—was married to another.

SONG.*

LORD ROLAND.

LORD ROLAND rose, and went to mass,
  And doffed his mourning weed!
And bade them bring a looking-glass,
  And saddle fast a steed;
"I'll deck with gems my bonnet's loop,
  And wear a feather fine,
And when lorn lovers sit and droop
  Why, I will sit and dine!
    Sing merrily, sing merrily,
  And fill the cup of wine!

Though Elgitha be thus untrue,
  Adèle is beauteous yet;
And he that's baffled by the blue
  May bow before the jet;
So welcome—welcome hall or heath!
  So welcome shower or shine!
And wither there, thou willow wreath,
  Thou never shalt be mine!
    Sing merrily, sing merrily,
  And fill the cup of wine!

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Proud Elgitha ! a health to thee,—
  A health in brimming gold !
And store of lovers after me,
  As honest, and less cold :
My hand is on my bugle horn,
  My boat is on the brine ;
If ever gallant died of scorn,
  I shall not die of thine !
    Sing merrily, sing merrily !
  And fill the cup of wine !

CHILDHOOD AND HIS VISITORS.

Once on a time, when sunny May
  Was kissing up the April showers,
I saw fair Childhood hard at play
  Upon a bank of blushing flowers :
Happy—he knew not whence or how,—
  And smiling,—who could choose but love him?
For not more glad than Childhood's brow
  Was the blue heaven that beamed above him.

Old Time, in most appalling wrath,
  That valley's green repose invaded ;
The brooks grew dry upon his path,
  The birds were mute, the lilies faded.
But Time so swiftly winged his flight,
  In haste a Grecian tomb to batter,
That Childhood watched his paper kite,
  And knew just nothing of the matter.

With curling lip and glancing eye
  Guilt gazed upon the scene a minute;
But Childhood's glance of purity
  Had such a holy spell within it,
That the dark demon to the air
  Spread forth again his baffled pinion,
And hid his envy and despair,
  Self-tortured, in his own dominion.

Then stepped a gloomy phantom up,
  Pale, cypress-crowned, Night's awful daughter,
And proffered him a fearful cup
  Full to the brim of bitter water;
Poor Childhood bade her tell her name;
  And when the beldame muttered—"Sorrow,"
He said—"Don't interrupt my game;
  I'll taste it, if I must, to-morrow."

The Muse of Pindus thither came,
  And wooed him with the softest numbers
That ever scattered wealth and fame
  Upon a youthful poet's slumbers;
Though sweet the music of the lay,
  To Childhood it was all a riddle,
And, "Oh," he cried, "do send away
  That noisy woman with the fiddle!"

Then Wisdom stole his bat and ball,
  And taught him, with most sage endeavour,
Why bubbles rise and acorns fall,
  And why no toy may last for ever.
She talked of all the wondrous laws
  Which Nature's open book discloses,
And Childhood, ere she made a pause,
  Was fast asleep among the roses.

Sleep on, sleep on! oh! Manhood's dreams
  Are all of earthly pain or pleasure,
Of Glory's toils, Ambition's schemes,
  Of cherished love or hoarded treasure:
But to the couch where Childhood lies
  A more delicious trance is given,
Lit up by rays from seraph eyes,
  And glimpses of remembered Heaven!

LOVE AT A ROUT.

When some mad poet stops to muse
About the moonlight and the dews,
  The Fairies and the Fauns,
He's apt to think, he's apt to swear,
That Cupid reigns not anywhere
  Except in groves and lawns,
That none have vulnerable livers
But bards who haunt the banks of rivers,
That none are fair enough for witches
But maids who roam through dells and ditches,
That dreams are twice as sweet as dances,
That cities never breed romances,
That Beauty always keeps a cottage,
And Innocence grows pure on pottage.
Yes! those dear dreams are all divine;
And those dear dreams have all been mine;
I like the dawning of the day,
I like the smell of new-mown hay,
I like the peaches and the posies,—
But chiefly, when the season closes,
I wander from my drowsy desk
To revel in the picturesque,

To hear beneath those hoary trees
The far-off murmur of the seas,
Or trace yon river's many channels
With Petrarch, and a brace of spaniels,
Combining foolish rhymes together,
And killing sorrow, and shoe-leather.

Then, as I see some village maid
Go dancing down the sunny glade,
Coquetting with her fond adorer
As nobler dames have done before her,
"Give me," I cry, "the quiet bliss
Of souls like these, of scenes like this;
Where damsels eat and sleep in peace,
Where gallants never heard of Greece,
Where day is day, and night is night,
Where frocks—and morals—both are white;
Blue eyes below—blue skies above—
Here are the homes, the hearts, for Love!
But this is idle; I have been
A sojourner in many a scene,
And picked up wisdom in my way,
And cared not what I had to pay;
Smiling and weeping all the while,
As other people weep and smile;
And I have learnt that Love is not
Confined to any hour or spot;
He lights the smile and fires the frown
Alike in desert and in town.
I think fair faces not more fair
In Peebles, than in Portman Square,
And glances not a ray more bright
In moonbeams, than in candle-light;
I think much witchcraft oft reposes
In wreaths of artificial roses,

And ringlets—I have ne'er disdained them
Because the barber has profaned them;
I've been half mad with half a million
Whose legs have never crossed a pillion,
Whose hands have never dressed a salad,
Whose lips have never sung a ballad:
I think that many a modern dance
Breeds pretty subjects for romance;
And many a concert has its springs
For breaking hearts as well as strings:
In short, I'm very sure that all
Who seek or sigh for Beauty's thrall
May breathe their vows, and feed their passion,
Though whist and waltzing keep in fashion,
And make the most enchanting sonnets,
In spite of diamonds, and French bonnets!

BEAUTY AND HER VISITORS.

I LOOKED for Beauty:—on a throne,
  A dazzling throne of light, I found her;
And Music poured its softest tone
  And flowers their sweetest breath, around her.
A score or two of idle gods,
  Some dressed as peers, and some as peasants,
Were watching all her smiles and nods,
  And making compliments and presents.

And first young Love, the rosy boy,
  Exhibited his bow and arrows,
And gave her many a pretty toy,
  Torches, and bleeding hearts, and sparrows:

She told him, as he passed, she knew
  Her court would scarcely do without him ;
But yet—she hoped they were not true—
  There were some awkward tales about him.

Wealth deemed that magic had no charm
  More mighty than the gifts he brought her,
And linked around her radiant arm
  Bright diamonds of the purest water :
The goddess, with a scornful touch,
  Unclasped the gaudy, galling fetter ;
And said,—she thanked him very much,—
  She liked a wreath of roses better.

Then Genius snatched his golden lute,
  And told a tale of love and glory :
The crowd around were hushed and mute
  To hear so sad and sweet a story ;
And Beauty marked the minstrel's cheek,
  So very pale—no bust was paler ;
Vowed she could listen for a week ;
  But really—he *should* change his tailor !

As died the echo of the strings,
  A shadowy Phantom kneeled before her,
Looked all unutterable things,
  And swore, to see was to adore her ;
He called her veil a cruel cloud,
  Her cheek a rose, her smile a battery :
She fancied it was Wit that bowed ;—
  I'm almost certain it was Flattery.

There was a beldame finding fault
  With every person's every feature :
And by the sneer, and by the halt,
  I knew at once the odious creature :

"You see," quoth Envy, "I am come
  To bow—as is my bounden duty;—
They tell me Beauty is at home;—
  Impossible! that *can't* be Beauty!"

I heard a murmur far and wide
  Of "Lord! how quick the dotard passes!"
As Time threw down at Beauty's side
  The prettiest of his clocks and glasses;
But it was noticed in the throng
  How Beauty marred the maker's cunning;
For when she talked, the hands went wrong;
  And when she smiled, the sands stopped running.

Death, in a doctor's wig and gown,
  Came, arm in arm with Lethe, thither,
And crowned her with a withered crown,
  And hinted, Beauty too must wither!
"Avaunt!" she cried,—"how came he here?
  The frightful fiend! he's my abhorrence!"
I went and whispered in her ear,
  "He shall not hurt you!—sit to Lawrence!"

THE FORSAKEN.

He never meets me as of old,
  As friends less cherished meet me;
His glance is even calm and cold,
  To welcome or to greet me:
His sighs ne'er follow where I move,
  Or tell what others' sighs do;—
But though his *lips* ne'er say, "I love,"
  I often think his *eyes* do!

He never turns, amid the throng,
  Where colder ears will listen;
Or gives one thought to that poor song
  Once made his eyelids glisten;
But sometimes when our glances meet,
  As looks less warm—more wise—do,
Albeit his *lips* ne'er say, "'Tis sweet,"—
  I often think his *eyes* do!

Oh! brighter smiles than mine may glass
  His hours of mirth or sorrow;
And fairer forms than mine may pass
  Across his path to-morrow:
But something whispers solace yet,
  As stars through darkened skies do;—
His *lips* ne'er say, "I don't forget,"—
  I often think his *eyes* do!

SECOND LOVE.

"L'on n' aime bien qu' une seule fois; c'est la premierè. Les amours qui suivent sont moins involontaires!"—LA BRUYERE.

How shall I woo her!—I will stand
  Beside her when she sings;
And watch that fine and fairy hand
  Flit o'er the quivering strings:
And I will tell her I have heard,
  Though sweet her song may be,
A voice whose every whispered word
  Was more than song to me.

How shall I woo her?—I will gaze
  In sad and silent trance
On those blue eyes, whose liquid rays
  Look love in every glance:
And I will tell her, eyes more bright,
  Though bright her own may beam,
Will fling a deeper spell to-night
  Upon me in my dream.

How shall I woo her?—I will try
  The charms of olden time,
And swear by earth, and sea, and sky,
  And rave in prose and rhyme:
And I will tell her, when I bent,
  My knee in other years,—
I was not half so eloquent,—
  I could not speak for tears!

How shall I woo her?—I will bow
  Before the holy shrine;
And pray the prayer and vow the vow,
  And press her lips to mine;
And I will tell her, when she parts
  From passion's thrilling kiss,
That memory to many hearts
  Is dearer far than bliss.

Away, away, the chords are mute,
  The bond is rent in twain;
You cannot wake that silent lute,
  Nor clasp those links again;
Love's toil, I know, is little cost,
  Love's perjury is light sin;
But souls that lose what I have lost,
  What have they left to win?

HOPE AND LOVE.

One day through Fancy's telescope,
  Which is my richest treasure,
I saw, dear Susan, Love and Hope
  Set out in search of pleasure:
All mirth and smiles I saw them go;
  Each was the other's banker;
For Hope took up her brother's bow,
  And Love, his sister's anchor.

They rambled on o'er vale and hill,
  They passed by cot and tower;
Through summer's glow and winter's chill,
  Through sunshine and through shower:
But what did those fond playmates care
  For climate, or for weather?
All scenes to them were bright and fair
  On which they gazed together.

Sometimes they turned aside to bless
  Some Muse and her wild numbers,
Or breathe a dream of holiness
  On Beauty's quiet slumbers:
"Fly on," said Wisdom, with cold sneers,
  "I teach my friends to doubt you:"
"Come back," said Age, with bitter tears,
  "My heart is cold without you."

When Poverty beset their path
  And threatened to divide them,
They coaxed away the beldame's wrath
  Ere she had breath to chide them,

By vowing all her rags were silk,
  And all her bitters, honey,
And showing taste for bread and milk,
  And utter scorn of money.

They met stern Danger in their way
  Upon a ruin seated;
Before him kings had quaked that day,
  And armies had retreated:
But he was robed in such a cloud
  As Love and Hope came near him,
That though he thundered long and loud,
  They did not see or hear him.

A grey-beard joined them, Time by name;
  And Love was nearly crazy
To find that he was very lame,
  And also very lazy:
Hope, as he listened to her tale,
  Tied wings upon his jacket;
And then they far outran the mail,
  And far outsailed the packet.

And so, when they had safely passed
  O'er many a land and billow,
Before a grave they stopped at last,
  Beneath a weeping willow:
The moon upon the humble mound
  Her softest light was flinging;
And from the thickets all around
  Sad nightingales were singing.

"I leave you here," quoth Father Time,
  As hoarse as any raven;
And Love kneeled down to spell the rhyme
  Upon the rude stone graven:

But Hope looked onward, calmly brave,
  And whispered, "Dearest brother—
We're parted on this side the grave,—
  We'll meet upon the other."

STANZAS.

O'ER yon Churchyard the storm may lower;
  But, heedless of the wintry air,
  One little bud shall linger there,
A still and trembling flower.

Unscathed by long revolving years,
  Its tender leaves shall flourish yet,
  And sparkle in the moonlight, wet
With the pale dew of tears.

And where thine humble ashes lie,
  Instead of 'scutcheon or of stone,
  It rises o'er thee, lonely one,
Child of obscurity!

Mild was thy voice as Zephyr's breath,
  Thy cheek with flowing locks was shaded!
  But the voice hath died, the cheek hath faded
In the cold breeze of death!

Brightly thine eye was smiling, sweet !
  But now decay hath stilled its glancing ;
  Warmly thy little heart was dancing,
But it hath ceased to beat !

A few short months—and thou wert here !
  Hope sat upon thy youthful brow ;
  And what is thy memorial now ?
A flower—and a Tear.

CASSANDRA.

  THEY hurried to the feast,
  The warrior and the priest,
And the gay maiden with her jewelled brow ;
  The minstrel's harp and voice
  Said "Triumph and rejoice !"—
One only mourned !—many are mourning now !

  "Peace ! startle not the light
  With the wild dreams of night !"—
So spake the Princes in their pride and joy,
  When I, in their dull ears,
  Shrieked forth my tale of tears,
"Woe to the gorgeous city, woe to Troy !"

  Ye watch the dim smoke rise
  Up to the lurid skies ;
Ye see the red light flickering on the stream ;
  Ye listen to the fall
  Of gate, and tower, and wall ;
Sisters, the time is come !—alas, it is no dream !

Through hall, and court, and porch,
Glides on the pitiless torch
The swift avengers faint not in their toil:
Vain now the matron's sighs,
Vain now the infant's cries;—
Look, sisters, look! who leads them to the spoil?

Not Pyrrhus, though his hand
Is on his father's brand;
Not the fell framer of the accursèd steed;
Not Nestor's hoary head,
Nor Teucer's rapid tread,
Nor the fierce wrath of impious Diomede.

Visions of deeper fear
To-night are warring here;—
I know them, sisters, the mysterious Three:
Minerva's lightning frown,
And Juno's golden crown,
And him, the mighty Ruler of the sounding sea!

Through wailing and through woe
Silent and stern they go;
So have I ever seen them in my trance:
Exultingly they guide
Destruction's fiery tide,
And lift the dazzling shield, and point the deadly lance.

Lo, where the old man stands,
Folding his palsied hands,
And muttering, with white lips, his querulous prayer:
"Where is my noble son,
My best my bravest one—
Troy's hope and Priam's—where is Hector, where?"

Why is thy falchion grasped?
Why is thy helmet clasped?
Fitter the fillet for such brow as thine!
The altar reeks with gore;
O sisters, look no more!
It is our father's blood upon the shrine!

And ye, alas! must roam
Far from your desolate home,
Far from lost Ilium, o'er the joyless wave;
Ye may not from these bowers
Gather the trampled flowers
To wreath sad garlands for your brethren's grave.

Away, away! the gale
Stirs the white-bosomed sail;
Hence! look not back to freedom or to fame;
Labour must be your doom,
Night-watchings, days of gloom,
The bitter bread of tears, the bridal couch of shame.

Even now some Grecian dame
Beholds the signal flame,
And waits, expectant, the returning fleet;
"Why lingers yet my lord?
Hath he not sheathed his sword?
Will he not bring my handmaid to my feet?"

Me too, the dark Fates call:
Their sway is over all,
Captor and captive, prison-house and throne:—
I tell of others' lot;
They hear me, heed me not!
Hide, angry Phœbus, hide me from mine own!

SIR NICHOLAS AT MARSTON MOOR.

To horse, to horse, Sir Nicholas! the clarion's note is high;
To horse, to horse, Sir Nicholas! the huge drum makes reply:
Ere this hath Lucas marched with his gallant cavaliers,
And the bray of Rupert's trumpets grows fainter on our ears.
To horse, to horse, Sir Nicholas! White Guy is at the door,
And the vulture whets his beak o'er the field of Marston Moor.

Up rose the Lady Alice from her brief and broken prayer,
And she brought a silken standard down the narrow turret stair.
Oh, many were the tears those radiant eyes had shed,
As she worked the bright word "Glory" in the gay and glancing thread;
And mournful was the smile that o'er those beauteous features ran,
As she said, "It is your lady's gift, unfurl it in the van."

"It shall flutter, noble wench, where the best and boldest ride,
Through the steel-clad files of Skippon and the black dragoons of Pride;
The recreant soul of Fairfax will feel a sicklier qualm,
And the rebel lips of Oliver give out a louder psalm,
When they see my lady's gew-gaw flaunt bravely on their wing,
And hear her loyal soldiers shout, For God and for the King!"—

'Tis noon; the ranks are broken along the royal line;
They fly, the braggarts of the court, the bullies of the Rhine:
Stout Langley's cheer is heard no more, and Astley's helm is down,
And Rupert sheathes his rapier with a curse and with a frown;
And cold Newcastle mutters, as he follows in the flight,
"The German boar had better far have supped in York to-night."

The knight is all alone, his steel cap cleft in twain,
His good buff jerkin crimsoned o'er with many a gory stain;
But still he waves the standard, and cries amid the rout—
"For Church and King, fair gentlemen, spur on and fight it out!"
And now he wards a Roundhead's pike, and now he hums a stave,
And here he quotes a stage-play, and there he fells a knave.

Good speed to thee, Sir Nicholas! thou hast no thought of fear;
Good speed to thee, Sir Nicholas! but fearful odds are here.
The traitors ring thee round, and with every blow and thrust,
"Down, down," they cry, "with Belial, down with him to the dust!"
"I would," quoth grim old Oliver, "that Belial's trusty sword
This day were doing battle for the Saints and for the Lord!"—

The lady Alice sits with her maidens in her bower;
The grey-haired warden watches on the castle's highest tower.—
"What news, what news, old Anthony?"—"The field is lost and won,
The ranks of war are melting as the mists beneath the sun;
And a wounded man speeds hither,—I am old and cannot see,
Or sure I am that sturdy step my master's step should be."—

"I bring thee back the standard from as rude and rough a fray,
As e'er was proof of soldier's thews, or theme for minstrel's lay,
Bid Hubert fetch the silver bowl, and liquor *quantum suff:*
I'll make a shift to drain it, ere I part with boot and buff;
Though Guy through many a gaping wound is breathing out his life,
And I come to thee a landless man, my fond and faithful wife!

"Sweet, we will fill our money-bags, and freight a ship for France,
And mourn in merry Paris for this poor realm's mischance;
Or, if the worse betide me, why, better axe or rope,
Than life with Lenthal for a king, and Peters for a pope!
Alas, alas, my gallant Guy! out on the crop-eared boor,
That sent me with my standard on foot from Marston Moor!"

THE COVENANTER'S LAMENT FOR BOTHWELL BRIDGE.

THE men of sin prevail!
Once more the prince of this world lifts his horn;
Judah is scattered, as the chaff is borne
Before the stormy gale.

Where are our brethren? where
The good and true, the terrible and fleet?
They whom we loved, with whom we sat at meat,
With whom we kneeled in prayer?

Mangled and marred they lie
Upon the bloody pillow of their rest;
Stern Dalzell smiles, and Clavers with a jest
Spurs his fierce charger by.

So let our foes rejoice;
We to the Lord, who hears their impious boasts,
Will call for comfort; to the God of hosts
We will lift up our voice.

Give ear unto our song;
For we are wandering o'er our native land
As sheep that have no shepherd; and the hand
Of wicked men is strong.

Only to Thee we bow:
Our lips have drained the fury of Thy cup;
And the deep murmurs of our hearts go up
To Heaven for vengeance now.

Avenge,—oh! not our years
Of pain and wrong, the blood of martyrs shed,
The ashes heaped upon the hoary head,
The maiden's silent tears,

The babe's bread torn away,
The harvest blasted by the war-steed's hoof,
The red flame wreathing o'er the cottage roof,
Judge not for these to-day !—

Is not Thine own dread rod
Mocked by the proud, Thy holy book disdained,
Thy name blasphemed, Thy temple courts profaned?—
Avenge Thyself, O God !

Break Pharaoh's iron crown ;
Bind with new chains their nobles and their kings ;
Wash from thine house the blood of unclean things,
And hurl their Dagon down !

Come in Thine own good time !
We will abide ; we have not turned from Thee,
Though in a world of grief our portion be,
Of bitter grief and crime.

Be Thou our guard and guide !
Forth from the spoiler's synagogue we go,
That we may worship where the torrents flow
And where the whirlwinds ride.

From lonely rocks and caves
We will pour forth our sacrifice of prayer.—
On, brethren, to the mountains ! seek we there
Safe temples, quiet graves !

WRITTEN UNDER A PICTURE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

Most beautiful! I gaze and gaze
  In silence on the glorious pile,
And the glad thoughts of other days
  Come thronging back the while.
To me dim memory makes more dear
  The perfect grandeur of the shrine;
But if I stood a stranger here,
  The ground were still divine.

Some awe the good and wise have felt,
  As reverently their feet have trod
On any spot where man hath knelt
  To commune with his God;
By sacred spring, or haunted well,
  Beneath the ruined temple's gloom,
Beside the feeble hermit's cell,
  Or the false Prophet's tomb.

But when was high devotion graced
  With lovelier dwelling, loftier throne,
Than here the limner's art hath graced
  From the time-honoured stone?
The Spirit here of worship seems
  To bind the soul in willing thrall,
And heavenward hopes and holy dreams
  Come at her voiceless call;

At midnight, when the lonely moon
  Looks from a vapour's silvery fold;
At morning, when the sun of June
  Crests the high towers with gold;

For every change of hour and form
  Makes that fair scene more deeply fair,
And dusk and daybreak, calm and storm,
  Are all Religion there.

ANTICIPATION.

"Oh yes! he is in Parliament;
  He's been returning thanks;
You can't conceive the time he's spent
  Already on his franks.
He'll think of nothing, night and day,
  But place, and the *Gazette*:"—
No matter what the people say,—
  You won't believe them yet.

"He filled an album, long ago,
  With such delicious rhymes;
Now we shall only see, you know,
  His speeches in the *Times*:
And liquid tone and beaming brow,
  Bright eyes and locks of jet,
He'll care for no such nonsense now:"
  Oh! don't believe them yet!

"I vow he's turned a Goth, a Hun,
  By that disgusting Bill;
He'll never make another pun;
  He's danced his last quadrille.
We shall not see him flirt again
  With any fair coquette;
He'll never laugh at Drury Lane."—
  Psha!—don't believe them yet.

"Last week I heard his uncle boast
  He's sure to have the seals;
I read it in the *Morning Post*,
  That he has dined at Peel's;
You'll never see him any more,
  He's in a different set:
He cannot eat at half-past four:"—
  No?—don't believe them yet.

"In short, he'll soon be false and cold,
  And infinitely wise;
He'll grow next year extremely old,
  He'll tell enormous lies;
He'll learn to flatter and forsake,
  To feign and to forget:"—
O whisper—or my heart will break—
  You won't believe them yet!

MARS DISARMED BY LOVE.

(1830.)

AYE, bear it hence, thou blessed child,
  Though dire the burden be,
And hide it in the pathless wild,
  Or drown it in the sea;
The ruthless murderer prays and swears;
  So let him swear and pray;
Be deaf to all his oaths and prayers,
  And take the sword away.

We've had enough of fleets and camps,
  Guns, glories, odes, gazettes,

Triumphal arches, coloured lamps,
  Huzzas and epaulettes ;
We could not bear upon our head
  Another leaf of bay ;
That horrid Buonaparte's dead :
  Yes, take the sword away,

We're weary of the noisy boasts
  That pleased our patriot throngs ;
We've long been dull to Gooch's toasts,
  And tame to Dibdin's songs ;
We're quite content to rule the wave
  Without a great display ;
We're known to be extremely brave ;
  But take the sword away.

We give a shrug, when fife and drum
  Play up a favourite air ;
We think our barracks are become
  More ugly than they were ;
We laugh to see the banners float :
  We loathe the charger's bray ;
We don't admire a scarlet coat ;
  Do take the sword away.

Let Portugal have rulers twain,
  Let Greece go on with none,
Let Popery sink or swim in Spain
  While we enjoy the fun ;
Let Turkey tremble at the knout,
  Let Algiers lose her Dey,
Let Paris turn her Bourbons out :
  Bah ! take the sword away.

Our honest friends in Parliament
  Are looking vastly sad ;

Our farmers say with one consent
  It's all immensely bad ;
There was a time for borrowing,
  And now it's time to pay ;
A budget is a serious thing ;
  So take the sword away.

And, oh, the bitter tears we wept
  In those our days of fame,—
The dread that o'er our heart-strings crept
  With every post that came,—
The home affections, waged and lost
  In every far-off fray,—
The price that British glory cost !
  Ah, take the sword away !

We've plenty left to hoist the sail
  Or mount the dangerous breach,
And Freedom breathes in every gale
  That wanders round our beach ;
When duty bids us dare or die,
  We'll fight, another day ;
But till we know the reason why,
  Take—take the sword away.

WATERLOO.

"On this spot the French cavalry charged, and broke the English squares!"—*Narrative of a French Tourist.*

"Is it true, think you?"—*Winter's Tale.*

AYE, here such valorous deeds were done
  As ne'er were done before ;

Aye, here the reddest wreath was won
  That ever Gallia wore;
Since Ariosto's wondrous knight
  Made all the Paynims dance,
There never dawned a day so bright
  As Waterloo's on France.

The trumpet poured its deafening sound,
  Flags fluttered on the gale,
And cannon roared, and heads flew round
  As fast as summer hail;
The sabres flashed their light of fear,
  The steeds began to prance,
The English quaked from front to rear,—
  They never quake in France.

The cuirassiers rode in and out
  As fierce as wolves and bears;
'Twas grand to see them slash about
  Among the English squares!
And then the Polish Lancer came
  Careering with his lance;
No wonder Britain blushed for shame
  And ran away from France!

The Duke of York was killed that day;
  The King was sadly scarred;
Lord Eldon, as he ran away,
  Was taken by the Guard;
Poor Wellington with fifty Blues
  Escaped by some strange chance;
Henceforth I think he'll hardly choose
  To show himself in France.

So Buonaparte pitched his tent
  That night in Grosvenor Place,

And Ney rode straight to Parliament
  And broke the Speaker's mace;
"Vive l'empereur" was said and sung,
  From Peebles to Penzance;
The Mayor and Aldermen were hung,
  Which made folk laugh in France.

They pulled the Tower of London down,
  They burnt our wooden walls,
They brought the Pope himself to town,
  And lodged him in St. Paul's;
And Gog and Magog rubbed their eyes,
  Awaking from a trance,
And grumbled out in great surprise,
  "Oh, mercy! we're in France!"

They sent a Regent to our Isle,
  The little King of Rome;
And squibs and crackers all the while
  Blazed in the Place Vendôme;
And ever since in arts and power
  They're making great advance;
They've had strong beer from that glad hour,
  And sea-coal fires, in France.

My uncle, Captain Flanigan,
  Who lost a leg in Spain,
Tells stories of a little man,
  Who died at St. Helène.
But bless my heart, they can't be true;
  I'm sure they're all romance;
John Bull was beat at Waterloo!
  They'll swear to that in France.

THE NEW ORDER OF THINGS.

"Incipiunt magni procedere menses."—VIRGIL.

(1830.)

WE'RE sick of this distressing state
  Of order and repose ;
We have not had enough of late
  Of blunders or of blows ;
We can't endure to pass our life
  In such a humdrum way ;
We want a little pleasant strife :
  The Whigs are in to-day !

Our worthy fathers were content
  With all the world's applause,
They thought they had a Parliament,
  And liberty, and laws.
It's no such thing ; we've wept and groaned
  Beneath a despot's sway ;
We've all been whipped and starved and stoned :
  The Whigs are in to-day !

We used to fancy Englishmen
  Had broken Europe's chain,
And won a battle now and then
  Against the French in Spain ;
Oh no ! we never ruled the waves,
  Whatever people say ;
We've all been despicable slaves :
  The Whigs are in to-day !

It's time for us to see the things
  Which other folks have seen,

It's time we should cashier our kings,
  And build our guillotine;
We'll abrogate Police and Peers,
  And vote the Church away;
We'll hang the parish overseers:
  The Whigs are in to-day!

We'll put the landlords to the rout,
  We'll burn the College Halls,
We'll turn St. James's inside out
  And batter down St. Paul's.
We'll hear no more of Bench or Bar;
  The troops shall have no pay;
We'll turn adrift our men-of-war;
  The Whigs are in to-day!

We fear no bayonet or ball
  From those who fight for hire,
For Baron Brougham has told them all
  On no account to fire;
Lord Tenterden looks vastly black,
  But Baron Brougham, we pray,
Will strip the ermine from his back:
  The Whigs are in to-day!

Go pluck the jewels from the crown,
  The colours from the mast;
And let the Three per Cents come down,
  We can but break at last;
If Cobbett is the first of men,
  The second is Lord Grey;
Oh, must we not be happy, when
  The Whigs are in to-day!

SONG.—WHERE IS MISS MYRTLE?

AIR—"Sweet Kitty Clover."

WHERE is Miss Myrtle? can anyone tell?
  Where is she gone, where is she gone?
She flirts with another, I know very well;
  And I—am left all alone!
She flies to the window when Arundel rings,—
She's all over smiles when Lord Archibald sings,—
It's plain that her Cupid has two pair of wings:
  Where is she gone, where is she gone?
Her love and my love are different things;
  And I—am left all alone!

I brought her, one morning, a rose for her brow;
  Where is she gone, where is she gone?
She told me such horrors were ne'er worn now:
  And I—am left all alone!
But I saw her at night with a rose in her hair,
And I guess who it came from—of course I don't care!
We all know that girls are as false as they're fair;
  Where is she gone, where is she gone?
I'm sure the lieutenant's a horrible bear:
  And I—am left all alone!

Whenever we go on the Downs for a ride,
  Where is she gone, where is she gone?
She looks for another to trot by her side:
  And I—am left all alone!
And whenever I take her downstairs from a ball,
She nods to some puppy to put on her shawl:
I'm a peaceable man, and I don't like a brawl;—
  Where is she gone, where is she gone?
But I would give a trifle to horsewhip them all;
  And I—am left all alone!

She tells me her mother belongs to the sect,
  Where is she gone, where is she gone?
Which holds that all waltzing is quite incorrect;
  And I—am left all alone!
But a fire's in my heart, and a fire's in my brain,
When she waltzes away with Sir Phelim O'Shane;
I don't think I ever *can* ask her again:
  Where is she gone, where is she gone?
And, Lord! since the summer she's grown very plain;
  And I—am left all alone!

She said that she liked me a twelvemonth ago;
  Where is she gone, where is she gone?
And how should I guess that she'd torture me so?
  And I—am left all alone!
Some day she'll find out it was not very wise
To laugh at the breath of a true lover's sighs;
After all, Fanny Myrtle is not such a prize:
  Where is she gone, where is she gone?
Louisa Dalrymple has exquisite eyes;
  And I'll be—no longer alone!

THE CONFESSION.

"FATHER—Father—I confess—
  Here he kneeled and sighed,
When the moon's soft loveliness
  Slept on turf and tide.
In my ear the prayer he prayed
  Seems to echo yet;
But the answer that I made—
  Father—I forget!
                Ora pro me!

"Father—Father—I confess—
  Precious gifts he brought;
Satin sandal, silken dress;
  Richer ne'er were wrought;
Gems that make the daylight dim,
  Plumes in gay gold set;—
But the gaud I gave to him—
  Father—I forget!
    Ora pro me!

"Father—Father—I confess—
  He's my beauty's thrall,
In the lonely wilderness,
  In the festive hall;
All his dreams are aye of me,
  Since our young hearts met;
What my own may sometimes be—
  Father—I forget!
    Ora pro me!"

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN LADY MYRTLE'S "BOCCACCIO."

In these gay pages there is food
For every mind and every mood,
  Fair Lady, if you dare to spell them:
Now merriment—now grief prevails;
But yet the best of all the tales
  Is of the young group met to tell them.

Oh, was it not a pleasant thought
To set the pestilence at nought,
  Chatting among sweet streams and flowers

Of jealous husbands, fickle wives,
Of all the tricks which love contrives
  To see through veils, and talk through towers?

Lady, they say the fearful guest
Onward—still onward to the west,
  Poised on his sulphurous wings, advances,
Who on the frozen river's banks
Has thinned the Russian despot's ranks,
  And marred the might of Warsaw's lances.

Another year—a brief, brief year—
And lo, the fell destroyer here!
  He comes with all his gloomy terrors;
Then Guilt will read the properest books,
And Folly wear the soberest looks,
  And Virtue shudder at her errors.

And there'll be sermons in the street;
And every friend and foe we meet
  Will wear the dismal garb of sorrow;
And quacks will send their lies about,
And weary Halford will find out
  He must have four new bays to-morrow.

But you shall fly from their dark signs,
As did those happy Florentines,
  Ere from your cheek one rose is faded;
Aud hide your youth and loveliness
In some bright garden's green recess,
  By walls fenced round, by huge trees shaded.

There brooks shall dance in light along,
And birds shall trill their constant song
  Of pleasure, from their leafy dwelling;

You shall have music, novels, toys;
But still the chiefest of your joys
  Must be, fair Lady, story-telling.

Be cautious how you choose your men:
Don't look for people of the pen,
  Scholars who read, or write the papers;
Don't think of wits, who talk to dine,
Who drink their patron's newest wine,
  And cure their patron's newest vapours.

Avoid all youths who toil for praise
By quoting Liston's last new phrase,
  Or sigh to leave high fame behind them.
For swallowing swords, or dancing jigs,
Or imitating ducks and pigs;
  Take men of sense, if you can find them.

Live, laugh, tell stories; ere they're told,
New themes succeed upon the old,
  New follies come, new faults, new fashions;
An hour, a minute will supply
To thought a folio history
  Of blighted hopes, and thwarted passions.

King Death, when he has snatched away
Drunkards from brandy, Dukes from play,
  And common-councilmen from turtle,
Shall break his dart in Grosvenor Square,
And mutter, in his fierce despair,
  "Why, what's become of Lady Myrtle?"

A BALLAD

TEACHING HOW POETRY IS BEST PAID FOR.

"Non voglio cento scudi."—*Italian Song.*

O SAY not that the minstrel's art,
  The glorious gift of verse,
Though his hopes decay, though his friends depart,
  Can ever be a curse;
Though sorrow reign within his heart,
  And poortith hold his purse.

Say not his toil is profitless;
  Though he charm no rich relation,
The Fairies all his labours bless
  With such remuneration
As Mr. Hume would soon confess
  Beyond his calculation.

Annuities and Three per Cents,
  Little cares he about them;
And Indian bonds, and tithes, and rents,
  He rambles on without them;
But love, and noble sentiments,
  Oh, never bid him doubt them!

Childe Florice rose from his humble bed
  And prayed, as a good youth should;
And forth he sped, with a lightsome tread,
  Into the neighbouring wood;
He knew where the berries were ripe and red,
  And where the old oak stood.

And as he lay at the noon of day
  Beneath the ancient tree,

A grey-haired pilgrim passed that way ;
  A holy man was he,
And he was wending forth to pray
  At a shrine in a far countrie.

Oh, his was a weary wandering,
  And a song or two might cheer him,
The pious Childe began to sing,
  As the ancient man drew near him ;
The lark was mute as he touched the string,
  And the thrush said, " Hear him, hear him ! "

He sang high tales of the martyred brave,
  Of the good, and pure, and just,
Who have gone into the silent grave
  In such deep faith and trust,
That the hopes and thoughts which sain and save
  Spring from their buried dust.

The fair of face, and the stout of limb,
  Meek maids and grandsires hoary,
Who have sung on the cross their rapturous hymn,
  As they passed to their doom of glory ;
Their radiant fame is never dim,
  Nor their names erased from story.

Time spares the stone where sleep the dead
  With angels watching round them ;
The mourner's grief is comforted
  As he looks on the chains that bound them ;
And peace is shed on the murderer's head,
  And he kisses the thorns that crowned them

Such tales he told ; and the pilgrim heard
  In a trance of voiceless pleasure ;

For the depths of his inmost soul was stirred
  By the sad and solemn measure :
" I give thee my blessing," was his word,
  " It is all I have of treasure ! "—

A little child came bounding by ;
  And he, in a fragrant bower,
Had found a gorgeous butterfly,
  Rare spoil for a nursery dower,
Which with fierce step and eager eye
  He chased from flower to flower.

" Come hither, come hither," 'gan Florice call ;
  And the urchin left his fun :
So from the hall of poor Sir Paul
  Retreats the baffled dun ;
So Ellen parts from the village ball,
  Where she leaves a heart half won.

Then Florice did the child caress,
  And sang his sweetest songs :
Their theme was of the gentleness
  Which to the soul belongs,
Ere yet it knows the name or dress
  Of human rights and wrongs ;

And of the wants which make agree
  All parts of this vast plan ;
How life is in whate'er we see,
  And only life in man ;
What matter where the less may be,
  And where the longer span ?

And how the heart grows cold without
  Soft Pity's freshening dews ;

And how when any life goes out
  Some little pang ensues :—
Facts which great soldiers often doubt,
  And wits who write reviews.

Oh, song hath power o'er Nature's springs,
  Though deep the Nymph has laid them !
The child gazed—gazed on gilded wings
  As the next bright breeze displayed them ;
But he felt the while that the meanest things
  Are dear to Him that made them !

The sun went down behind the hill,
  The breeze was growing colder ;
But there the Minstrel lingered still,
  And amazed the chance beholder,
Musing beside a rippling rill
  With a harp upon his shoulder.

And soon, on a graceful steed and tame,
  A sleek Arabian mare,
The lady Juliana came
  Riding to take the air,
With many a lord at whose proud name
  A Radical would swear.

The Minstrel touched his lute again;
  It was more than a Sultan's crown,
When the Lady checked her bridle rein
  And lit from her palfrey down :—
What would you give for such a strain,
  Rees, Longman, Orme and Brown ?

He sang of Beauty's dazzling eyes,
  Of Beauty's melting tone,

And her praise is a richer prize
  Than the gems of Persia's throne,
And her love a bliss which the coldly wise
  Have never, never known.

He told how the valiant scoff at fear
  When the sob of her grief is heard ;
How fiercely they fight for a smile or a tear,
  How they die for a single word :—
Things which, I own, to me appear
  Exceedingly absurd.

The Lady soon had heard enough ;
  She turned to hear Sir Denys
Discourse in language vastly gruff
  About his skill at Tennis ;
While smooth Sir Guy described the stuff
  His mistress wore at Venice.

The Lady smiled one radiant smile,
  And the Lady rode away—
There is not a Lady in all our Isle,
  I have heard a Poet say,
Who can listen more than a little while
  To a poet's sweetest lay.—

His mother's voice was fierce and shrill
  As she set the milk and fruit :
"Out on thine unrewarded skill,
  And on thy vagrant lute ;
Let the strings be broken an they will,
  And the beggar lips be mute !"

Peace, peace ! the Pilgrim as he went
  Forgot the Minstrel's song,

But the blessing that his wan lips sent
  Will guard the Minstrel long,
And keep his spirit innocent,
  And turn his hand from wrong.

Belike the child had little thought
  Of the moral the Minstrel drew ;
But the dream of a deed of kindness wrought—
  Brings it not peace to you ?
And does not a lesson of virtue taught
  Teach him that teaches too ?

And if the Lady sighed no sigh
  For the Minstrel or his hymn,—
Yet when he shall lie 'neath the moonlit sky,
  Or lip the goblet's brim,
What a star in the mist of memory
  That smile will be to him !

OLD WINE.

It was my father's wine,—alas !
  It was his chiefest bliss
To fill an old friend's evening glass
  With nectar such as this.
I think I have as warm a heart,
  As kind a friend, as he ;
Another bumper ere we part !
  Old wine, old wine, for me.

In this we toasted William Pitt,
  Whom twenty now outshine ;
O'er this we laughed at Canning's wit,
  Ere Hume's was thought as fine ;

In this "The King"—"The Church"—"The Laws"—
Have had their three times three;
Sound wine befits as sound a cause;
Old wine, old wine for me.

In this, when France in those long wars
Was beaten black and blue,
We used to drink our troops and tars,
Our Wellesley and Pellew;
Now, things are changed, though Britain's fame
May out of fashion be,
At least my wine remains the same!
Old wine, old wine for me.

My neighbours, Robinson and Lamb,
Drink French of last year's growth;
I'm sure, however they may sham,
It disagrees with both.
I don't pretend to interfere;
An Englishman is free;
But none of that cheap poison here!
Old wine, old wine for me.

Some dozens lose, I must allow,
Something of strength and hue;
And there are vacant spaces now
To be filled up with new;
And there are cobwebs round the bins,
Which some don't like to see;
If these are all my cellar's sins,
Old wine, old wine for me.

THE TALENTED MAN.

A LETTER FROM A LADY IN LONDON TO A LADY AT LAUSANNE.

DEAR Alice ! you'll laugh when you know it,—
  Last week, at the Duchess's ball,
I danced with the clever new poet,—
  You've heard of him,—Tully St. Paul.
Miss Jonquil was perfectly frantic ;
  I wish you had seen Lady Anne !
It really was very romantic,
  He *is* such a talented man !

He came up from Brazenose College,
  Just caught, as they call it, this spring ;
And his head, love, is stuffed full of knowledge
  Of every conceivable thing.
Of science and logic he chatters,
  As fine and as fast as he can ;
Though I am no judge of such matters,
  I'm sure he's a talented man.

His stories and jests are delightful ;—
  Not stories or jests, dear, for you ;
The jests are exceedingly spiteful,
  The stories not always *quite* true.
Perhaps to be kind and veracious
  May do pretty well at Lausanne ;
But it never would answer,—good gracious !
  Chez nous—in a talented man.

He sneers,—how my Alice would scold him !—
  At the bliss of a sigh or a tear ;

He laughed—only think !—when I told him
  How we cried o'er Trevelyan last year ;
I vow I was quite in a passion ;
  I broke all the sticks of my fan ;
But sentiment's quite out of fashion,
  It seems, in a talented man.

Lady Bab, who is terribly moral,
  Has told me that Tully is vain,
And apt—which is silly—to quarrel,
  And fond—which is sad—of champagne.
I listened, and doubted, dear Alice,
  For I saw, when my Lady began,
It was only the Dowager's malice ;—
  She *does* hate a talented man !

He's hideous, I own it. But fame, love,
  Is all that these eyes can adore ;
He's lame,—but Lord Byron was lame, love,
  And dumpy,—but so is Tom Moore.
Then his voice,—*such* a voice ! my sweet creature,
  It's like your Aunt Lucy's toucan :
But oh ! what's a tone or a feature,
  When once one's a talented man ?

My mother, you know, all the season,
  Has talked of Sir Geoffrey's estate ;
And truly, to do the fool reason,
  He *has* been less horrid of late.
But to-day, when we drive in the carriage,
  I'll tell her to lay down her plan ;—
If ever I venture on marriage,
  It must be a talented man !

P.S.—I have found on reflection,
  One fault in my friend,—*entre nous ;*

Without it, he'd just be perfection ;—
  Poor fellow, he has not a *sou !*
And so, when he comes in September
  To shoot with my uncle, Sir Dan,
I've promised mamma to remember
  He's *only* a talented man !

PLUS DE POLITIQUE.

(1832.)

No politics !—I cannot bear
  To tell our ancient fame ;
No politics !—I do not dare
  To paint our present shame !
What we have been, what we must be,
  Let other minstrels say ;
It is too dark a theme for me :
  No politics to-day !

I loved to see the captive's chain
  By British hands burst through ;
I loved to sing the fields of Spain,
  The war of Waterloo :
But now the Russians' greedy swords
  Are edged with English pay ;
We help, we hire, the robber hordes :
  No politics to-day !

I used to look on many a home
  Of industry and art ;
I gazed on pleasure's gorgeous dome,
  On labour's busy mart :

From Derby's rows, from Bristol's fires,
  I turn with tears away;
I can't admire what Brougham admires:
  No politics to-day!

Let's talk of Coplestone and prayers,
  Of Kitchener and pies,
Of Lady Sophonisba's airs,
  Of Lady Susan's eyes;
Let's talk of Mr. Attwood's cause,
  Of Mr. Pococks's play,
Of fiddles, bubbles, rattles, straws!
  No politics to-day!

TALES OUT OF SCHOOL.

A DROPPED LETTER FROM A LADY.

YOUR godson, my sweet Lady Bridget,
  Was entered at Eton last May;
But really, I'm all in a fidget
  Till the dear boy is taken away;
For I feel an alarm which, I'm certain,
  A mother to you may confess,
When the newspaper draws up the curtain,
  The terrible Windsor Express.

You know I was half broken-hearted
  When the poor fellow whispered "Good bye!"
As soon as the carriage had started
  I sat down in comfort to cry.

Sir Thomas looked on while I fainted,
  Deriding—the bear !—my distress ;
But what were the hardships I painted
  To the tales of the Windsor Express ?

The planter in sultry Barbadoes
  Is a terrible tyrant, no doubt ;
In Moscow, a Count carbonadoes
  His ignorant serfs with the knout ;
Severely men smart for their errors
  Who dine at a man-of-war's mess ;
But Eton has crueller terrors
  Than these,—in the Windsor Express.

I fancied the Doctor at College
  Had dipped, now and then, into books ;
But, bless me ! I find that his knowledge
  Is just like my coachman's or cook's :
He's a dunce—I have heard it with sorrow ;—
  'Twould puzzle him sadly, I guess,
To put into English to-morrow
  A page of the Windsor Express.

All preachers of course should be preaching
  That virtue's a very good thing ;
All tutors of course should be teaching
  To fear God, and honour the King ;
But at Eton they've regular classes
  For folly, for vice, for excess ;
They learn to be villains and asses,
  Nothing else in the Windsor Express.

Mrs. Martha, who nursed little Willy,
  Believes that she nursed him in vain :

Old John, who takes care of the filly,
  Says "He'll ne'er come to mount her again!"
My Juliet runs up to her mother,
  And cries, with a mournful caress,
"Oh, where have you sent my poor brother?
  Look, look at the Windsor Express!"

Ring, darling, and order the carriage;
  Whatever Sir Thomas may say,—
Who has been quite a fool since our marriage,—
  I'll take him directly away.
For of all their atrocious ill-treating
  The end it is easy to guess;
Some day they'll be killing and eating
  My boy—in the Windsor Express!

STANZAS TO THE SPEAKER ASLEEP.

(1833.)

SLEEP, Mr. Speaker; it's surely fair
If you don't in your bed, that you should in your chair,
Longer and longer still they grow,
Tory and Radical, Aye and No;
Talking by night, and talking by day;—
Sleep, Mr. Speaker; sleep, sleep while you may!

Sleep, Mr. Speaker; slumber lies
Light and brief on a Speaker's eyes;
Fielden or Finn, in a minute or two,
Some disorderly thing will do;
Riot will chase repose away;—
Sleep, Mr. Speaker; sleep, sleep while you may!

Sleep, Mr. Speaker ; Cobbett will soon
Move to abolish the sun and moon ;
Hume, no doubt, will be taking the sense
Of the House on a saving of thirteen pence ;
Grattan will growl, or Baldwin bray ;—
Sleep, Mr. Speaker ; sleep, sleep while you may !

Sleep, Mr. Speaker ; dream of the time
When loyalty was not quite a crime ;
When Grant was a pupil in Canning's school ;
When Palmerston fancied Wood a fool ;
Lord, how principles pass away !
Sleep, Mr. Speaker ; sleep, sleep, while you may !

Sleep, Mr. Speaker ; sweet to men
Is the sleep that cometh but now and then ;
Sweet to the sorrowful, sweet to the ill,
Sweet to the children that work in a mill ;
You have more need of sleep than they ;—
Sleep, Mr. Speaker ; sleep, sleep while you may !

LATIN HYMN TO THE VIRGIN.

I.

VIRGIN Mother, thou hast known
Joy and sorrow like my own ;
In thy arms the bright Babe lay,
As my own in mine to-day ;
So he wept and so he smiled ;
Ave Mary ! guard my child !

II.

From the pains and perils spread
Round about our path and bed,
Fierce desires, ambitious schemes,
Moody doubts, fantastic dreams,
    Pleasures idle, passions wild,
    Ave Mary ! guard my child !

III.

Make him whatsoe'er may be
Dearest to the saints and thee ;
Tell him, from the throne above,
What to loathe and what to love ;
    To be true and just and mild,
    Ave Mary ! teach my child !

IV.

By the wondrous mercy won
For the world by thy blest son,
By the rest his labours wrought,
By the bliss his tortures bought,
    By the Heaven he reconciled,
    Ave Mary ! bless my child !

V.

If about his after fate
Sin and sorrow darkly wait,
Take him rather to thine arms
From the world and the world's harms ;
    Thus unscathed, thus undefiled,
    Ave Mary ! take my child !

THE NEWLY-WEDDED.

(1835.)

I.

Now the rite is duly done;
  Now the word is spoken;
And the spell has made us one
  Which may ne'er be broken:
Rest we, dearest, in our home,—
  Roam we o'er the heather,—
We shall rest, and we shall roam,
  Shall we not? together.

II.

From this hour the summer rose
  Sweeter breathes to charm us;
From this hour the winter snows
  Lighter fall to harm us:
Fair or foul—on land or sea—
  Come the wind or weather,
Best or worst, whate'er they be,
  We shall share together.

III.

Death, who friend from friend can part,
  Brother rend from brother,
Shall but link us, heart and heart,
  Closer to each other:
We will call his anger play,
  Deem his dart a feather,
When we meet him on our way
  Hand in hand together.

SKETCH OF A YOUNG LADY

FIVE MONTHS OLD.

(*October* 10, 1836.)

My pretty, budding, breathing flower,
  Methinks, if I to-morrow
Could manage, just for half-an-hour,
  Sir Joshua's brush to borrow,
I might immortalise a few
  Of all the myriad graces
Which Time, while yet they all are new,
  With newer still replaces.

I'd paint, my child, your deep blue eyes,
  Their quick and earnest flashes ;
I'd paint the fringe that round them lies,
  The fringe of long dark lashes ;
I'd draw with most fastidious care
  One eyebrow, then the other,
And that fair forehead, broad and fair,
  The forehead of your mother.

I'd oft retouch the dimpled cheek
  Where health in sunshine dances ;
And oft the pouting lips, where speak
  A thousand voiceless fancies ;
And the soft neck would keep me long,
  The neck, more smooth and snowy
Than ever yet in schoolboy's song
  Had Caroline or Chloe.

Nor less on those twin rounded arms
  My new-found skill would linger,

Nor less upon the rosy charms
  Of every tiny finger;
Nor slight the small feet, little one,
  So prematurely clever
That, though they neither walk nor run,
  I think they'd jump for ever.

But then your odd endearing ways—
  What study ere could catch them?
Your aimless gestures, endless plays—
  What canvass ere could match them?
Your lively leap of merriment,
  Your murmur of petition,
Your serious silence of content,
  Your laugh of recognition.

Here were a puzzling toil, indeed,
  For Art's most fine creations!—
Grow on, sweet baby; we will need,
  To note your transformations,
No picture of your form or face,
  Your waking or your sleeping,
But that which Love shall daily trace,
  And trust to Memory's keeping.

Hereafter, when revolving years
  Have made you tall and twenty,
And brought you blended hopes and fears,
  And sighs and slaves in plenty,
May those who watch our little saint
  Among her tasks and duties,
Feel all her virtues hard to paint,
  As now we deem her beauties.

TO HELEN.

(*July 7th*, 1836.)

When some grim sorceress, whose skill
Had bound a sprite to work her will,
In mirth or malice chose to ask
Of the faint slave the hardest task,

She sent him forth to gather up
Great Ganges in an acorn cup;
Or Heaven's unnumbered stars to bring
In compass of a signet ring.

Thus Helen bids her poet write
The thanks he owes this morning's light;
And "Give me,"—so he hears her say,—
"Four verses, only four, to-day."

Dearest and best! she knows, if wit
Could ever half love's debt acquit,
Each of her tones and of her looks
Would have its four, not lines, but books.

TO HELEN.

(WITH A SMALL CANDLESTICK, A BIRTHDAY PRESENT.)

February 12th, 1838.

If, wand'ring in a wizard's car
  Through yon blue ether, I were able
To fashion of a little star
  A taper for my Helen's table,—

"What then?" she asks me, with a laugh:—
Why then, with all Heaven's lustre glowing,
It would not gild her path with half
The light her love o'er mine is throwing!

TO HELEN.

(*July 7th*, 1839.)

DEAREST, I did not dream, four years ago,
When through your veil I saw your bright tear shine,
Caught your clear whisper, exquisitely low,
And felt your soft hand tremble into mine,
That in so brief—so very brief a space,
He who in love both clouds and cheers our life,
Would lay on you, so full of light, joy, grace,
The darker, sadder duties of the wife,—
Doubts, fears, and frequent toil, and constant care
For this poor frame, by sickness sore bestead;
The daily tendance on the fractious chair,
The nightly vigil by the feverish bed.

Yet not unwelcomed doth this morn arise,
Though with more gladsome beams it might have shone:
Strength of these weak hands, light of these dim eyes,
In sickness, as in health,—bless you, My own!

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

(1839.)

THAT she may see, our bright and fair,
  How arduous is her path to fame,
How much of solemn thought and care
  An empire's interests fitly claim,—
That she may know how poor 'twould seem
  In one who graces Britain's throne
To patronise a party's scheme
  Or make a favourite's cause her own,—
That she may feel to whom belong
  Alike the contest and the prize,
Whence springs the valour of the strong,
  Whence flows the counsel of the wise,—
That she may keep in womanhood
  The heaven-born impulses of youth,
The zeal for universal good,
  The reverence for eternal truth,—
That she may seek the right and just,—
  That she may shun the false and mean,—
That she may win all love and trust,
  Blessing and blest,—God save the Queen.

CHARADES.

I.

SIR HILARY charged at Agincourt;
  Sooth, 'twas an awful day!
And though in that old age of sport
The rufflers of the camp and court
  Had little time to pray,

'Tis said Sir Hilary muttered there
Two syllables by way of prayer :

My First to all the brave and proud
  Who see to-morrow's sun :
My next, with her cold and quiet cloud,
To those who find their dewy shroud
  Before to-day's be done :
And both together to all blue eyes,
That weep when a warrior nobly dies.

II.

My First in torrents bleak and black
  Was rustling from the sky,
When with my Second at his back
  Young Cupid wandered by ;
" Now take me in ; the moon hath past ;
  I pray ye, take me in !
The lightnings flash, the hail falls fast,
All Hades rides the thunder-blast ;
  I'm dripping to the skin ! "

" I know thee well, thy songs and sighs ;
  A wicked god thou art,
And yet most welcome to the eyes,
  Most witching to the heart ! "
The wanderer prayed another prayer,
  And shook his drooping wing ;
The Lover bade him enter there,
And wrung my First from out his hair,
  And dried my Second's string.

And therefore—(so the urchin swore,
  By Styx, the fearful river,
And by the shafts his quiver bore,
  And by his shining quiver)—
That Lover aye shall see my Whole
  In life's tempestuous Heaven ;
And when the lightnings cease to roll,
Shall fix thereon his dreaming soul
  In the deep calm of even.

III.

Alas! for that forgotten day
  When chivalry was nourished,
When none but friars learned to pray,
  And beef and beauty flourished ;
And fraud in kings was held accurst,
  And falsehood sin was reckoned,
And mighty chargers bore my First,
  And fat monks wore my Second !

Oh, then I carried sword and shield,
  And casque with flaunting feather,
And earned my spurs in battlefield,
  In winter and rough weather ;
And polished many a sonnet up
  To ladies' eyes and tresses,
And learned to drain my father's cup,
  And loose my falcon's jesses.

But dim is now my grandeur's gleam;
  The mongrel mob grows prouder;
And everything is done by steam,
  And men are killed by powder:
And now I feel my swift decay,
  And give unheeded orders,
And rot in paltry state away,
  With Sheriffs and Recorders.

IV

On the casement frame the wind beat high;
Never a star was in the sky;
All Kenneth Hold was wrapt in gloom,
And Sir Everard slept in the Haunted Room.

I sat and sang beside his bed;
Never a single word I said,
  Yet did I scare his slumber;
And a fitful light in his eyeball glistened,
And his cheek grew pale as he lay and listened,
For he thought or dreamt that Fiends and Fays
Were reckoning o'er his fleeting days
  And telling out their number.
Was it my Second's ceaseless tone?
On my Second's hand he laid his own;
The hand that trembled in his clasp
Was crushed by his convulsive grasp.

Sir Everard did not fear my First ;—
He had seen it in shapes that men deem worst,
  In many a field and flood ;
Yet in the darkness of that dread
His tongue was parched and his reason fled,
And he watched, as the lamp burned low and
    dim,
To see some Phantom, gaunt and grim,
  Come dabbled o'er with blood.

Sir Everard kneeled, and strove to pray;
He prayed for light and he prayed for day,
  Till terror checked his prayer ;
And ever I muttered, clear and well,
"Click, click," like a tolling bell,
Till, bound by fancy's magic spell,
  Sir Everard fainted there.

And oft from that remembered night,
Around the taper's flickering light
  The wrinkled beldames told,
Sir Everard had knowledge won
Of many a murder darkly done,
Of fearful sights, and fearful sounds,
And ghosts that walk their midnight rounds
  In the tower of Kenneth Hold !

V.

THE canvas rattled on the mast
  As rose the swelling sail,
And gallantly the vessel past
  Before the cheering gale ;
And on my First Sir Florice stood,
  As the far shore faded now,

And looked upon the lengthening flood
  With a pale and pensive brow :—
"When I shall bear thy silken glove
  Where the proudest Moslem flee,
My lady love, my lady love,—
  O waste one thought on me!"

Sir Florice lay in a dungeon cell
  With none to soothe or save,
And high above his chamber fell
  The echo of the wave;
But still he struck my Second there,
  And bade its tones renew
These hours when every hue was fair
  And every hope was true :—
"If still your angel footsteps move
  Where mine may never be,
My lady love, my lady love,
  O dream one dream of me!"

Not long the Christian captive pined!
  My Whole was round his neck;
A sadder necklace ne'er was twined
  So white a skin to deck:
Queen Folly ne'er was yet content
  With gems or golden store,
But he who wears this ornament
  Will rarely sigh for more :—
"My spirit to the Heaven above,
  My body to the sea,
My heart to thee, my lady love,—
  O weep one tear for me!"

VI.

ROW on, row on !—The First may light
My shallop o'er the wave to-night,
But she will hide in a little while
The lustre of her silent smile ;
For fickle she is, and changeful still,
As a madman's wish, or a woman's will.

Row on, row on !—The Second is high
In my own bright lady's balcony ;
And she beside it, pale and mute,
Untold her beads, untouched her lute,
Is wondering why her lover's skiff
So slowly glides to the lonely cliff.

Row on, row on !—When the Whole is fled,
The song will be hushed and the rapture dead,
And I must go in my grief again
To the toils of day and the haunts of men,—
To a future of fear and a present of care,
And Memory's dream of the things that were.

VII.

I GRACED Don Pedro's revelry
All drest in fur and feather,
When Loveliness and Chivalry
Were met to feast together ;
He flung the slave who moved the lid
A purse of maravedis,—
And this that gallant Spaniard did
For me, and for the Ladies.

He vowed a vow, that noble knight,
  Before he went to table,
To make his only sport the fight,
  His only couch the stable,
Till he had dragged, as he was bid,
  Five score of Turks to Cadiz,—
And this that gallant Spaniard did,
  For me, and for the Ladies.

To ride through mountains, where my First
  A banquet would be reckoned,—
Through deserts where to quench their thirst,
  Men vainly turn my Second;—
To leave the gates of fair Madrid,
  To dare the gate of Hades,—
And this that gallant Spaniard did,
  For me and for the Ladies.

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